THE HISTORY OF *CHARLOTTE SUMMERS*, THE Fortunate PARISH GIRL.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR;

Sold by CORBETT, the Publiſher, at *Addiſon's Head* oppoſite *St. Dunſtan's Church*, in *Fleetſtreet*.

BRITISH MUSEUM

CONTENTS
OF THE
SECOND VOLUME.

BOOK III.

Containing an unfortunate Period of Miſs Summers's *Life.*

CHAP. I.

Containing a Diſſertation on Dreaming. Page 1

CHAP. II.

A Converſation between Miſs Summers *and her two Lovers, of very little Moment to any but ſuch as have Souls capable of reliſhing the ſocial Flame.* p. 10

CHAP. III.

Containing a remarkable Dream of Miſs Summers's; *and another Converſation between her and Sir* Thomas. p. 33

CHAP. IV.

Containing the Alarm at Lady Bountiful's *Houſe on Miſs* Summers's *being miſſed.* p. 56

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Containing the first Night of Miss Summers's *Travels.* p. 67

CHAP. VI.

Containing the Sequel of Miss Summers's *Journey.* p. 76

CHAP. VII.

Containing Miss Summers's *Adventures at* Hazlewood *Farm.* p. 88

CHAP. VIII.

Containing the Women's malicious Contrivance to ruin and expose Miss Summers. p. 108

CHAP. IX.

Containing Miss Summers's *Behaviour before the Justice, and her Release from this Persecution.* p. 134

BOOK IV.

Containing some more of the disastrous Part of Miss Summers's *History, but concluding with Part of that Happiness, which I'm sure every virtuous and good-natur'd Reader thinks she deserves, and wishes her to enjoy.*

CHAP. I.

Containing the Author's last Address to his Readers. p. 150

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Containing Miſs Summers's *Tranſactions during her Stay at Mr.* Worthy's, *her narrow Eſcape from Sir* Thomas, *and her ſetting out for* London. p. 155

CHAP. III.

Containing her firſt Acquaintance with Captain Price, *and her Viſit to Mrs.* Barnet, *the famous Fortune-teller in the Old-Baily.* p. 180

CHAP. IV.

Containing Oracles delivered from the myſtical Characters in a Coffee-Cup by Mrs. Clearſight, *a famous Profeſſor of that Art.* p. 205

CHAP. V.

Containing Miſs Summers's *Eſcape from Captain* Price. p. 212

CHAP. VII.

Containing the firſt Part of Miſs Summers's *Tranſactions with an eminent Stateſman and his neceſſary Woman, a Linnen-Draper in the* Strand. p. 239

CHAP. VIII.

Containing the ſecond Part of the Stateſman's Plot upon Miſs Summers; *her being ſent to*

to a Spunging-House, and the providential Defeat of the Courtier's Schemes and the Confusion of his Tools. p. 257

CHAP. IX.

Containing the Manner of her being relieved out of the Spunging-House; her recovering the Things stolen from her, and getting into the Service of a Lady of Distinction, where she remained till she was restored to the Rank due to her real Birth and Merit. p. 280

CHAP. X.

Containing an Account how Miss Summers *meets with her Father, after so long an Absence, and is restored to the Rank due to her Birth.* p. 295

CHAP. XI.

Containing what few could expect, viz. *an Account how Miss* Summers, *after all her great Struggles in Defence of her Virtue, went at last openly to Bed to a Man.* p. 313

5 JA 59

THE

THE HISTORY OF A PARISH GIRL.

BOOK III.

Containing an unfortunate Period of Miſs *Summers*'s Life.

CHAP. I.

Containing a Diſſertation on Dreaming.

A DISSERTATION on Dreaming! What the Devil does the Fellow mean? What have we to do with Dreaming? ſays *Dick Dapperwit*, in a Paſſion, pray leave off Fooling, and go on with your *Hiſtory of the Pariſh Girl*, and take ſome other Opportunity to tell us your

Dreams.—Not ſo faſt, good Mr. *Dapperwit*, we have more to do with Dreams than you imagine; and now the Crotchet is in my Head, you muſt hear what I have to offer on that Subject patiently, or turn over to another Chapter, where, for your Puniſhment, you will find nothing but Dreams: For what, pray, have we been doing all this while, but telling our Dreams? Its true, they are the Dreams of Men awake, yet they differ very little from our ſleeping Reveries. What are all the Works of the ancient and modern Poets, but ſo many regular Dreams where the Poets have left out all the incoherent Starts of the Imagination, ſo common in our ſleeping Labours, and entertained us with no more of their fanciful Reveries, than they could reduce to a regular Series attended with all the Circumſtances of Time and Place.

Were you to read my worſhipful Father's Common-Place Book, or the firſt rude Draught of his celebrated *Tom Jones*, and view the indigeſted Chaos from whence that inimitable Work was extracted, you could not diſtinguiſh it from the moſt incoherent Dream you ever had in your Life. There you ſee a Thought in Embrio, without Form or Figure; a Simile in the Bud, without any

any apparent Reſemblance to any Thing in Nature; there you may ſee the Limbs, and ſeveral Members of a Character, diſperſed in Miniature, without any Connexion or Coherence; or if any occur, perhaps that which is very unſeemly; for ſometimes you may meet with a half-finiſhed Limb of the chaſte Miſs *Weſtern*, lying without any Emotion next an uncloathed Member of the wicked *Tom Jones*. In ſhort, I can give you no other Idea of the firſt Thought, of a Poet, but to lead you to the Statuary's near *Hyde-Park-Corner*, where, in his Shop, you ſee Legs, Arms, Heads and Trunks, ſome finiſhed, ſome rudely blocked out, all lying higgledy piggledy, without any Order or Regularity; yet, when put together in their proper Places, give you the Image of a *Cæſar*, a *Marc Antony*, or a *Cleopatra*, a Man of Courage or a Coward, a Clown or a fine Gentleman, a Saint or a Devil, juſt as the Materials happen to be united. Indeed, there is this material Difference between the Figure-maker's Shop and the Repoſitory of a Poet, that the Figure-maker has nothing in his Cuſtody but what muſt turn out ſomething; when he makes a Head, though he does not know whether the Head is deſigned for a Saint or a Soldier, yet he is ſure it muſt turn out a Head for ſomebody: But the Poet has a thouſand Vagaries in his Pericranium that,

perhaps, he can never find an Opportunity to convert to any Uſe in Nature, but muſt remain upon his Hands as ſo much Lumber, that frequently rather embarraſſes, than forwards his Work.

The Antients had an Opinion of Poets, which ſeems to bear harder upon that Claſs of Men, than my ſuppoſing them Dreamers; for they would ſcarce allow that Judgment, or Common Senſe, had any thing to do with poetic Compoſitions; but that the Profeſſors of that Art were no better than Madmen, or at beſt Enthuſiaſts, who vented the enthuſiaſtic Reveries of an overheated Imagination. And the Poets themſelves, in theſe Days, were ſo far from being aſhamed of being reputed mad, that they aſſumed the Garb and Deportment of Lunaties: But I am not inclinable to go ſo far, as to ſuppoſe that my Brethren the Inhabitants of *Parnaſſus* are downright mad, though they may have a little Spice of Madneſs in their Compoſition, but, with the Antients, I contend, that the Judgment or Underſtanding has nothing to do with poetic Invention, but that the Whole is the Work of the Imagination, which is always at work, whether ſleeping or waking, and acts ſpontaneous, without receiving any

Laws

Laws from, or ſubmitting to any Rules formed by, the Will or Underſtanding.

Let the wiſeſt Poet of them all ſit down and command his Imagination to form a Fable according to any fixed Rule, and try if he is obeyed any more when awake in his Study, than when faſt aſleep in his Bed. He will find that he is not——but that the diſobedient Fancy forms juſt what Images it pleaſes, perhaps as remote from the Intention as *London* is from *Bantam*. He may endeavour to direct his Thoughts to ſome Object or Idea ſimular to his View, and ſomething may occur from that forced Aſſemblage of Ideas, like what he wants; but that is not Invention, it is meer Memory, and the Fable reſulting from thence is ſtolen from ſomething he has formerly read or ſeen, and is none of his own. What muſt he do then? He muſt wait till the Imagination hits voluntarily upon what he wants, which it may do when he is aſleep, as well as when he is awake; but it may chance, that he may ſleep all his Life-time before he dreams juſt as he would: To remedy this, he watches every Sally of the Imagination, and commits the rude Thought to Writing, without troubling his Head about the Connection, and when he has col-

lected a vaſt Heap of theſe incoherent Fancies, he ſits down and picks a Thought from one Place, a Simile from another, a Limb here, and a Member there, till he has formed the Similitude of a Character, which from the Heap he cloaths with Diction, Sentiment, and every thing elſe, to conſtitute it what he intends it ſhould reſemble. It is here the Judgment and Underſtanding are employed, in picking, chuſing, and rejecting the Materials which the Imagination has furniſhed. If the Imagination is naturally barren, and that the Man has dreamed but ſparingly, the poetic Iſſue, in ſpite of all the Wiſdom on Earth, turns out a poor, lean, meager, ſtarved, and decrepit Viſion; and if he has dreamed abundantly, and collected a large Share of ſleeping or waking Reveries, but wants Judgment to pick, chuſe, and digeſt his Materials, the Production proves monſtrous, out of ſhape, and unnatural.

Therefore I deſire that no Man may ſpeak diſreſpectful of Dreams for the future, ſince I have made it manifeſt, that to Dreams we owe the greateſt Pleaſure, and the moſt valuable Production the learned World is poſſeſſed of; and I myſelf have found ſo much Advantage from my ſleeping Dreams, as well

as

as waking Reveries, that it is the ſecond Office of the Day to recollect the Dream of the preceding Night, which I commit to Writing in all its Circumſtances, and from thence I have, from Time to Time, culled ſome very valuable Materials for the Entertainment and Edification of the Public. I took the firſt Hint of this Practice from my Father's Common-Place Book. I had ſtole one Day into his Study, not in Search of Knowledge, but of ſomething that was not to be found in ſo great Abundance in that Place, as Wit and Learning, and chanced to caſt my Eye on a large Folio Manuſcript, of which I turned over ſeveral Leaves, and met with the moſt odd and incoherent Flights that ever I dreamed in my Life. I was ſometimes flying in the Water, ſwimming in the Air, dancing on my Head; now in *England*, and in the Daſh of a Pen tranſported to both the Poles; now I ſoar'd aloft, and bruſh'd the Moon with my Wings, and the next Moment ſunk to the Centre. I could make neither Head nor Tail of it, but concluded that it was a Book of Dreams, for which from my Infancy I had conceived a wonderful Veneration; and from that Moment determined to keep a Regiſter of the nocturnal Excurſions of my Imagination, with a View only, at that

Time, to mark the Interpretation and Events of thoſe dark Oracles. —— But ſince that Time I have found them of much more Value to me than the Reſponſes of the *Delphic* Oracles; for there is ſcarce a Character in Life, but what my nocturnal Diary can ſupply me with a becoming Dreſs fit to cloath them in. Thus the Reader ſees, that whether I am aſleep or awake, I am always employed in ſomething to his Advantage. I wiſh I could recommend it to my female Readers, to take the Trouble to commit to Writing ſome of their ſleeping or waking Dreams: (What a foolliſh Fancy is this!) By it they might learn to dream regularly, and might ſee in their Sleep a Novel as entertaining as any ever wrote by Mrs. *Behn* or *Haywood*, and conveying, perhaps, as good a Moral; from whence they might learn more than they do at preſent, by ſtraining Interpretations to favour their Curioſity to peep into Futurity: For I am of Opinion, that it is the Fault of the Memory, and not of the Imagination, that our Dreams appear ſo incoherent and diſtorted: For where that Faculty is left to itſelf, without the Impulſe of outward Objects, I believe there will appear a Chain or Connection among the Images it forms. When awake, and we give Way to our Ima-

Imagination, Experience teaches every Man, that there is an apparent Connection amongſt the Ideas; I believe it muſt be the ſame Thing when we ſleep, only the Impreſſion on the Memory is ſo weak, the Chain and Coherence is frequently forgot, while ſome glaring Fancy, ſeemingly without Meaning, is remembered. How ſtrongly active is that Principle which informs the human Being! It is never at Reſt, always in Action, always thinking, and contemplating Objects really in Exiſtence, or forming others by its creative Power, capable of entertaining and exerciſing its Faculties. But now that I have hinted to the Ladies a new Employment for their Dreams; and taught my Brethren, who live upon the airy Diet of Invention, how to convert their ſleeping Hours to the Advantage of their waking Labours, I ſhall lay me down to reſt, and try what more I can dream of pretty Miſs *Summers*.

CHAP. II.

A Converſation between Miſs Summers *and her two Lovers, of very little Moment to any but ſuch as have Souls capable of reliſhing the ſocial Flame.*

THE next Day after the Converſation mentioned in the Cloſe of the firſt Volume between Lady *Bountiful* and Mr. *Crofts*, after Breakfaſt, the Lady *Bountiful*, Mr. *Crofts* and Miſs *Summers* were ſitting together, for Sir *Thomas* had left the Room on ſome Buſineſs; the Lady *Bountiful* roſe up, and told Miſs *Summers*,—I believe, Miſs, Mr. *Crofts* has ſomething particular to ſay to you; I adviſe you to liſten to him as one I have a particular Eſteem for, and who is every way qualified to make you happy;—and then left the Room without waiting for an Anſwer, which, indeed, Miſs was very incapable of framing. She was ſo thunderſtruck with a Speech, which had more of the Peremptory in it than any ſhe had heard of a long Time from her indulgent Benefactreſs. She ſat ſilent, with her Eyes fixed on the Ground, with the Tears ready to burſt. Mr. *Crofts* ſaw her Diſorder,

der, and was quite at a Loſs for Words to enter upon a Subject, he gueſſed by her Looks, would be highly diſagreeable.—— Why, Miſs *Summers*, that Face of Sorrow? Is it poſſible, that the very Thoughts of my having the Liberty to entertain you with my Paſſion, ſhould give you ſo much Uneaſineſs? Tell me, cruel Fair, in what Language I ſhall attempt your Heart, that may be leaſt offenſive to your Delicacy; tell me what I ſhall do to convince you with how pure and ardent a Flame I adore you; for, by Heavens! I ſeek but your Happineſs; to ſooth your Breaſt into Peace and Joy, and to reſtore you that calm Tranquillity I found you enjoy'd when I firſt came to this Place. —Would to God you could, reply'd Miſs *Summers* with a deep Sigh, but, alas! it is in vain for me to hope the Return of thoſe Days of Peace.——Why ſo, dear Madam? if my Fortune can contribute to your Quiet, I lay it at your Feet; and if you permit me, I ſhall make it the whole Study of my Life to make you happy. Suffer me, Madam, but to endeavour by the moſt obſequious Services, to cure you of thoſe Prejudices you ſeem to entertain againſt me, and warm you into Love and Happineſs. That Averſion you would expreſs cannot be natural to you; you are all Softneſs and amiable Good-

neſs to others, why am I the only Man to be curſed with your Hatred, who can have no Reliſh of Happineſs without you?——Ceaſe, for God's Sake! replied Miſs *Summers* haſtily, to torment me with a fruitleſs Paſſion; our Affections are not in our own Power: That Happineſs you ſpeak of we cannot communicate to each other; the Union you want would make us both wretched; therefore I conjure you, if you would not drive me to ſome Act of Madneſs, not to mention any more the hateful Subject;—and then flung out of the Room in great Diſorder, and went up to her own Apartment; where ſhe had not been long, before Sir *Thomas* entered. She bluſhed at the Sight of him; for at that Moment ſhe was figuring to herſelf how happy ſhe would eſteem herſelf if Lady *Bountiful* had ſaid as much in Favour of his Suit, as ſhe had offered in Behalf of *Crofts*.

Sir *Thomas* approached her with great Deference, as conſcious to himſelf he had given her Cauſe of Diſpleaſure at the laſt Interview. ——Forgive me, Madam, ſaid he, that I thus encroach upon your Privacy, but I cannot longer refrain acknowledging the Madneſs of my Behaviour the laſt Time I had an Opportunity to ſpeak to you alone, and

and ſuing for Forgiveneſs: For, Oh Miſs *Summers!* I cannot live without your Eſteem: how then can I ſupport your Hatred?—It is impoſſible, replied Miſs *Summers*, that Sir *Thomas* can do any thing to make me hate him; I cannot be ſo ungrateful, but to eſteem the Man to whoſe Family I am indebted for every Thing I am. If that can make you eaſy, Sir *Thomas*, you have as much, as a Heart full of Gratitude for the greateſt Obligations, can beſtow: But urge no farther; for all beyond That, is impoſſible.—Ah! why ſhould I be content with cold Eſteem? That you may beſtow on my Mother; but, Miſs *Summers*, I can claim no leſs than your warmeſt Affection: Yes, lovely Maid, you muſt go that one Step further; and bleſs me, by owning that you love the Man you eſteem. Where is the Unreaſonableneſs of that Requeſt, to aſk a Return of Affection to the Man who doats on you, and has no Being but what ſubſiſts on the Hopes of being for ever happy in your Charms? I ſee, my Charmer, kneeling and ſnatching her Hand which he preſſed to his Boſom, I ſee it in your dear Eyes; I feel it by Sympathy, that I am not indifferent to you; let me be here rooted for ever, and thus dart my whole Soul into your Boſom, till you confeſs the raviſhing Truth.——

Riſe,

Riſe, ſaid Miſs *Summers*, covered over with a Crimſon Bluſh, I cannot ſee the Son of my Benefactreſs in this humble Poſture. Riſe, Sir, and reſume yourſelf, and think but what you aſk, and think what ought to be my Anſwer: Conſidering my Circumſtances, what would it avail you, were I to own that you are far from being indifferent to me, and that your Happineſs is as dear to me as my own? What would it, I ſay, avail you to know this, when you know the unſurmountable Bars that lie betwixt us; Obſtacles that never can be removed, not ſo much as in Hope, unleſs you can reverſe the Order of Nature, and call back the Records of paſt Time that has ſtamped me with the indelible Character of a Child of Charity, and the Object of your Family's Bounty? Circumſtances, Sir *Thomas*, which would brand me with the blackeſt Ingratitude were I to indulge your fond Paſſion contrary to the Opinion of your Mamma, to whoſe tender Care of my helpleſs Youth I can never make ſo black a Return. Ceaſe then, Sir *Thomas*, to think of me in any other Shape than as your Friend; aſſiſt me even againſt yourſelf, to diſcharge in ſome Meaſure the manifold Obligations I owe to the kindeſt, tendereſt and beſt of Women.

How

How unreaſonable are you, Miſs *Summers*, cry'd Sir *Thomas* half crying, to aſk me to aſſiſt you againſt myſelf? Do you think I can ſee you become the Property of another; ſee my Rival riot in thoſe Charms in which all my preſent and future Hopes of Happineſs are centered, merely to gratify the Pride of a doating Parent, and to humour the Caprice of an enthuſiaſtic Virtue? No! it is impoſſible I ſhould bear the Thought without Deſtraction; give me then but Time to ſoften that obdurate Breaſt, and to combat with my Services, that chimerical Virtue, which bars my Happineſs: This you may, nay, you muſt grant me, if you have the leaſt Value for my Repoſe; I ſwear, my dear Charmer (kneeling once more) I never ſhall riſe from this Poſture, till you have promiſed not to yield to the Importunities of *Crofts*; grant me but this, and my Paſſion ſhall be ſilent as the Grave, my Lips ſhall be for ever ſealed till by my Actions I have convinced you how much I love, and that Circumſtances ſhall concur to allow my Fair to give me her Hand conſiſtent with thoſe rigid Rules which ſhe has laid down as the Principles of her Conduct.—It is eaſy for me, replied Miſs *Summers*, to make you that Promiſe, Sir *Thomas*, ſince I find in my

Breaſt

Breaſt ſuch a rooted Averſion to that Name, that I can ſcarce hear it with Temper; but don't take it as an Encouragement for your Addreſſes to me; that I can never give without your Mamma's Conſent; I'll ſooner periſh than give her any juſt Cauſe to complain of me on that ſcore, and I hope ſhe will be ſo juſt as not to interpoſe her Authority in Behalf of the Man I hate.

Sir *Thomas* was ſpeechleſs with Joy, had not Power to riſe, and could only ſpeak his Tranſport by imprinting a thouſand Kiſſes on her Hand, which he held in his; and ſhe but faintly ſtruggled to get it from him. They were both in this Situation, when Lady *Bountiful* opened the Door ſuddenly, and heard, it ſeems, Miſs *Summers*'s laſt Words, *viz.* 'I hope ſhe 'will be ſo juſt as not to interpoſe her 'Authority in behalf of the Man I hate.' On ſeeing Sir *Thomas* on his Knees, eagerly kiſſing Miſs *Summers*'s Hand, the old Lady flew out in the greateſt Paſſion, and the young People looked as if they had ſeen a Ghoſt.——Is this, Huſſey! ſaid ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to Miſs *Summers*, the Return you make to me for reſcuing you from Poverty and Wretchedneſs? Is this the Cauſe of your Averſion to Mr. *Croſts?*

Is

Is it your Regard for my mean-ſpirited Son? Muſt nothing ſerve your Turn, but to mix your beggarly Blood with mine? But I'll take Care you ſhall not. No! while I live, my Houſe ſhall never be ſtained with a Pariſh Girl.——Poor Wretch! addreſſing herſelf to Sir *Thomas*, have you no more Regard to that Blood that fills your worthleſs Veins, but to give your Knee to the Creature of my Charity; to one raiſed from the Dunghill, and but for my fooliſh Pity for her Youth, had been by this Time ſome dirty Scullion, or perhaps a baſer Proſtitute. By Heavens! I can ſcarce think you my Offspring, or the Son of my worthy Huſband. Thou muſt have been changed at Nurſe, and I have been foſtering, as my own, the mean-ſpirited Brat of ſome baſe-born Peaſant; for none but ſuch could harbour ſo mean a Thought, as to make honourable Love to a fair Beggar; but why did I mention honourable Love, thou couldſt not, durſt not think of it; thou haſt certainly debauched her Perſon, as well as her Mind.—— Miſs *Summers* was ſilent all the Time of this ill-natured Harangue, and Sir *Thomas* ſtood motionleſs; but when the Lady mentioned debauching her, Miſs ſunk down on the Floor in a Swoon. Sir *Thomas* then found

the

the Uſe of all his Limbs; his Countenance, that before was pale, now reddened up into a deep Scarlet; he ran to his lovely Miſtreſs, catched her in his Arms, and chafed her Temples to bring her to herſelf.——Have done, for Heaven's Sake, Madam, leſt I ſhould utter ſomething in my Paſſion unbecoming the Reſpect I owe you as my Mother; for by the eternal God, had any Thing human beſides yourſelf but muttered what you have now hinted againſt this wronged Innocence, this Moment had been his laſt: By G—d, Madam, ſhe is as chaſte as new-born Innocence, and has more Reſpect and Gratitude for you than you deſerve. But, Death! ſhe is gone, while I am raving here. Quit the Room and call for Help, or by Heavens I ſhall do ſome Deed of Deſperation on myſelf! I cannot ſee her thus.—— Lady *Bountiful* frightened out of her Wits at the Madneſs of her Son, and perhaps ſoftened by the Condition ſhe ſaw the lovely Sufferer in, ran to the Door, and called the Servants, by whoſe Help ſhe was with much Difficulty brought to herſelf, but ſo weak that ſhe was immediately put to Bed. While ſhe was undreſſing Sir *Thomas* was obliged, though much againſt his Will, to quit the Room, and Orders were given that he ſhould be no more admitted.

The

The Lady *Bountiful* retired to her own Apartment, highly chagrined at Sir *Thomas*'s Behaviour, who till this Minute, had always behaved to her with the utmoſt Reſpect and Submiſſion. She called for Parſon *Goodheart* and Dr. *Burton*, to whom ſhe related all that had paſſed in Miſs *Summers*'s Apartment. They were both much ſurprized, as they had never ſuſpected the leaſt Motion of an Intrigue between Miſs *Summers* and the Baronet. Dr. *Burton*, whoſe Eſteem for Miſs *Summers*, made him look upon the Baronet's Crime in a leſs ſevere Light than the Lady, would have offered ſomething in Juſtification of the young People, but that he knew the Lady *Bountiful*'s Foible, and that the bare Mention of any thing derogating in the ſmalleſt Degree from the Gentility of her Blood would ſet all in Combuſtion, choſe not to offer at a Defence, but propoſed that Sir *Thomas*, whoſe fiery Temper would not bear with too open Contradiction, ſhould be dealt with calmly, that if he could not be brought to think as they did, they might at leaſt fiſh out of him how far Matters were gone, that proper Meaſures might be taken to prevent them. It was ſome Time before Lady *Bountiful* could be reaſoned into this Conduct; ſhe reſented her Son's Uſage ſo much,

much, that ſhe could ſcarce be prevailed on to ſee him, but was for turning Miſs *Summers* forthwith out of Doors. But both the Doctors oppoſed this, as it would expoſe the Girl either to inevitable Ruin, or tempt Sir *Thomas* to ſome raſh Action, and that it was better to keep her where ſhe was, under a ſtrict Watch, to prevent all Intercourſe, and if poſſible to argue her out of her Conſent to marry Mr. *Crofts*, which would determine all their Fears on the ſcore of Sir *Thomas*. After much Argument on both Sides, Sir *Thomas* was called upon, and Parſon *Good-heart*, in his Mother's Preſence, began to lecture him about his Behaviour in Miſs *Summers*'s Apartment. Sir *Thomas* uſed, till this Juncture, to hear the Parſon preach for an Hour together without Interruption; but at this Time he had not quite ſo much Patience: He took him up ſhort:——Prithee, Doctor, go mind your Congregation, and don't preſume to trouble me with your Impertinence: I am not now to be tutored like a Boy. As for what paſſed between me and the Lady *Bountiful*, I know when ſhe is calm, free from Prejudice, and conſiders the Time, the Circumſtances, and the Provocation I had, ſhe will think I was not much out in my Reſpect to her. And as for Miſs *Summers*, Mr. Parſon, I charge you

on

on your Peril, to ſpeak of her, to think of her with the ſame Reverence you would on your Patron-Saint; the firſt Time I know you fail in it, I ſhall make free with your canonical Shoulders were you at the Altar.——Hear the ungracious Boy, how he dares juſtify to my Face, ſays Lady *Bountiful*, his irreverend Carriage to me on the ſcore of a dirty Beggar's Brat.——It is true, Madam, Fortune reduced her to the ſevereſt Circumſtances, but you know ſhe has as good Blood in her Veins as either you or I have, if your Pride would let you own it; but whether you do or not, when ſhe is my Wife, I believe there is ſcarce a Man in the County dares object to her or me any Thing concerning her Circumſtances: That ſhe is well born I know; that ſhe is well educated I know likewiſe, and thank you for it, as much as for my Being, which without her I tell you freely is not worth a Ruſh: You may make me miſerable by denying your Conſent; that indeed is in your Power; for, notwithſtanding how much you rail at that lovely Innocent, yet ſuch is her Gratitude to you, ſuch her Senſe of thoſe Benefits ſhe has received at your Hands, ſuch her elevated Virtue, that the Prayers of ſuffering Martyrs, nor the Eloquence of Angels can not prevail on her to make me happy, or ſo much

much as give the ſmalleſt Hopes without your Conſent. Her very laſt Words almoſt before you entered, and loaded her with ſuch mean Reflections, were, 'But don't 'think I can give Encouragement to your 'Addreſſes without your Mamma's Con-'ſent; I'll ſooner periſh than give her any 'juſt Cauſe of Complaint againſt me on that 'ſcore; and I hope, added ſhe, that ſhe 'will be ſo juſt as not to interpoſe her 'Authority in behalf of the Man I hate.' Theſe were her laſt Words, which were far from deſerving that Torrent of Reproach you loaded her with, or the mean Remembrance of the State you took her from. Alas, poor Girl! ſhe knows, and bears it in conſtant Remembrance. When I urged her by all that Love and Tenderneſs could dictate, but to give me hope that I was not indifferent to her, and that my Services might gain upon her Affection, 'Think, 'ſays the lovely virtuous Maid, think what 'you aſk; think, Sir *Thomas*, what ought 'to be my Anſwer conſidering my Circum-'ſtances. What would it avail you, were 'I to own that you are far from being in-'different to me, and that your Happineſs 'is as dear to me as my own? What would 'it, added ſhe, avail you to know this, 'when you know the unſurmountable Bars

'that

'that lie betwixt us; Obſtacles, that never 'can be removed, not ſo much as in Hope, 'unleſs you can reverſe the Order of Nature, 'and call back the Records of paſt Time, 'that has ſtamped me with the indelible 'Character of a Child of Charity, and the 'Object of your Family's Bounty; Cir-'cumſtances, Sir *Thomas*, that would brand 'me with the blackeſt Ingratitude were I to 'indulge your fond Paſſion contrary to the 'Opinion of your Mamma, to whoſe tender 'Care of my helpleſs Youth I can never 'make ſo black a Return. Ceaſe then, Sir '*Thomas*, to think of me in any other Shape 'than as your Friend; aſſiſt me againſt your-'ſelf to diſcharge in ſome Meaſure the ma-'nifold Obligations I owe the kindeſt, ten-'dereſt and beſt of Women.' Are theſe, continued Sir *Thomas*, Sentiments that me-rited the opprobrious Epithets with which you loaded her Innocence? Are they not ſuch as the ſtricteſt Virtue, and the moſt ex-tenſive Gratitude could inſpire? Can you wonder then, Madam, that I was carried into ſome Extremes in my Paſſion on hear-ing her Virtue arraigned in a Language al-together unbecoming my Mother. In ſhort, Madam, you and my wiſe Friends may lay Schemes of Happineſs for me as you pleaſe; you may oppoſe if you will my Deſigns upon

Miſs

Miſs *Summers*, but I aſſure you beforehand, that all will be in vain, for as I can know no Felicity but with her, ſo you may depend upon it I ſhall look upon every Perſon that uſes that young Creature ill, as my greateſt Enemy.—This ſaid, he flung out of the Room, and left the Lady *Bountiful* and her Privy-Council to reflect upon what he had ſaid.

The Lady *Bountiful*, on reflecting on what Sir *Thomas* had told her of Miſs *Summers*'s Behaviour, could not help being pleaſed with thoſe Sentiments of Gratitude ſhe had expreſſed; but ſtill her Pride hindered her from being ſoftened, as to the intended Match. She could not with any Patience think, that the Blood of the *Bountifuls* ſhould be mingled with a Pariſh Girl, however exalted her Merit might be otherways. She was highly provoked at the ungracious Behaviour of the young Baronet, and alarmed at the Obſtinacy of his Reſolution, which ſhe knew not how to break; for knowing the Haſtineſs of his Temper, ſhe was afraid of coming to open Extremities, either with him or Miſs; and afraid, leſt an Abatement of her Reſentment ſhould give an Encouragement to what ſhe was reſolved on no Event to conſent

conſent to. Dr. *Goodheart*, though he had all the Eſteem in the World for Miſs *Summers*, yet his Regard for Sir *Thomas*, whoſe Happineſs he thought, with his Mother, ſhould be meaſured by the additional Thouſands he might expect with a Spouſe, obliged him to adviſe, that Miſs *Summers* ſhould be inſtantly ſent out of the Way, into ſome remote Place, where Sir *Thomas* might have no Opportunity of ſeeing or converſing with her, in Hopes that Abſence might efface any Impreſſions he had conceived in her Favour. But this Motion Dr. *Burton* oppoſed with great Zeal, alledging, that as the young Lady, on her Part, had given no Encouragement to Sir *Thomas*'s Addreſſes, it would be unjuſt to puniſh her, and expoſe her Innocence among Strangers, for no other Reaſon but becauſe the Baronet was fooliſh: Beſides, added he, the Moment Lady *Bountiful* ceaſes to place Confidence in Miſs, from that Time ſhe is under no Obligations to oppoſe Sir *Thomas*'s Inclinations, out of Gratitude to her, by whom ſhe muſt look upon herſelf as abandoned; and you know the reſolute Diſpoſition of the Knight, as it will be hardly poſſible to keep him from the Knowledge of her Retreat, ſo he may, in a Fit of Madneſs, find Means to accompliſh his De-

ſires, in ſpite of all your Ladyſhip's Care to prevent it: Therefore my Advice would be, to encourage and ſtrengthen thoſe generous Sentiments, of which Miſs is now poſſeſſed, by friendly and open Uſage, and ſeeming to put an entire Confidence in her Virtue and Prudence, though at the ſame Time I would privately keep a very ſtrict Eye over her, but in ſuch Manner as ſhe might diſcover no Marks of the leaſt Suſpicion of her Conduct. I am perſuaded, added he, that a Behaviour of this kind muſt gain more upon a generous Mind, ſuch as Miſs *Summers* is eminently poſſeſſed of, than all the Rigours you can inflict, and muſt prove a greater Security againſt the fiery and raſh Diſpoſition of your Son, than if you were to ſend the unhappy Girl to the moſt remote Corner of the Iſland.

After very little Debate, this laſt Advice was reſolved to be followed; and the Lady *Bountiful* went immediately up to Miſs *Summers*'s Chamber, to make ſome Apology for what ſhe had ſaid in the laſt Converſation.

When the Lady entered the Room, Miſs was ſcarce recovered from the Swoon into which

which ſhe had fallen, and ſo very weak that ſhe could ſcarce ſpeak, and ſeemed to be in greater Agony on the Sight of Lady *Bountiful*, who ſhe believed was come to upbraid her. The Lady ordered the Servants to quit the Room, and with a Countenance all Mildneſs ſat down on the Bed-Side.—— I am come, ſaid ſhe, my dear Child, to beg your Pardon for ſome harſh Things I ſaid to you in my Son's Preſence; he has ſince told me, how different your Converſation was to what I imagined it. I ſaw him, my dear *Charlotte*, in a Poſture of making Love, and I haſtily concluded that you received and encouraged it. Conſider, what a Mother muſt feel, when ſhe ſees at once all her Schemes of Happineſs for an only Son fruſtrated, and you cannot blame the Paſſion I expreſſed. —— Oh! far from it, Madam, cried Miſs *Summers*, in a paſſionate Extaſy; the Goodneſs in condeſcending to apologize to a Creature of your own raiſing, ſhews me how vile I ſhould be, if I acted any thing to the Prejudice of ſo good, ſo great a Benefactreſs, and confirms me in what I always thought my Duty, to ſacrifice my Peace and Happineſs to your Quiet. Oh, tell me, Madam, how I ſhall repay, in ſome Meaſure, the vaſt Debt I owe you;

and inform me what I can do to ſecure your Fears with regard to Sir *Thomas*.

You know, Miſs *Summers*, replied the Lady *Bountiful*, I have always loved you as my own Child; and, next to that Boy, there is none on Earth I have ſo great an Eſteem for. I only, in return, deſire that you will deal with me candidly, and let me know your Sentiments, as to my Son's Paſſion, which he has openly declared.— Miſs bluſhed at the Queſtion, and remained ſome Moments in Silence, unwilling to diſcloſe the Secrets of her Heart, and not daring to diſſemble with her Patroneſs. At laſt her Regard to Truth got the better of all other Conſiderations.——I own to you, Madam, I am a bad Judge of my Sentiments on that Subject; I have too little Experience in the World, to make a ſure Judgment of my own Mind, with regard to Sir *Thomas*. All I know is this, that I have the greateſt Eſteem for him; but whether that Eſteem is founded on his being your Son, or to any latent Affection, I cannot be poſitive. I own to you I can feel no other Uneaſineſs at the Declaration he has made me of his Paſſion, but the Thoughts that ſuch a Match would be diſagreeable to you, and inconſiſtent with the Scheme of Happineſs you have

have propoſed for him; but you may be aſſured, Madam, that whatever Impreſſion he may make on my Heart, that I ſhall never entertain or encourage it, ſince I'm ſenſible it is not agreeable to you: All I am is owing to your Benevolence and Humanity, and I ſhould deteſt myſelf if I were not ready at all Times to ſacrifice every thing relating to myſelf to your Satisfaction.

I am pleaſed, returned Lady *Bountiful*, to find that you conceal nothing from me, and rejoice that your Sentiments are ſo agreeable to what I have always expected from your good Senſe. Whatever Regard you have for my Son, you muſt endeavour to ſuppreſs it, for you are to conſider he is young, and carried away by the Violence of a thoughtleſs Paſſion to ſay and do a thouſand Things which, in riper Years and more experienced Judgment, he would repent, and condemn himſelf for; and then, what he now thinks his greateſt Happineſs, he would look upon as his greateſt Curſe. This is always the Effects of Matches founded on the Paſſions of thoughtleſs Youth, which you ought to ſhun on your own Account, as well as the Regard you have for me, who in all Things elſe will do every Thing to contribute to your Wel-

fare and your happy Settlement in the World. In the mean Time, I rely on your Prudence, that you will avoid giving any Encouragement to my Son, and do all in your Power to diſſuade him from any Thoughts of you, and truſt that you will communicate to me any Overtures he may make to you: And I wiſh you would think ſeriouſly of accepting the Offers of Mr. *Crofts*, whoſe Paſſion is not the Reſult of youthful Folly, but the calm Deliberation of a Man of Senſe, and Experience in the World, who is capable of a laſting ſolid Affection founded on your real Merit, which a ſtricter Union muſt rather increaſe, than diminiſh, and give you, according to every human Probability, the ſureſt Proſpect of all the Happineſs which the conjugal State is capable of beſtowing on People of Senſe, Good-nature and Virtue.—Oh, Madam! name him not; the Thoughts of him my Soul abhors; the black Attempt he made on my Innocence might be pardoned in a thoughtleſs Youth, or a profeſſed Libertine, but in a Man of his deliberate ſedate Senſe, it ſpeaks the diſguiſed Hypocrite, and a Mind capable of the blackeſt Treachery, with whom it would be Madneſs in me to expect Peace or Happineſs: Could I but bring my Mind to think of Mr. *Crofts* but with calm

In-

Indifference, and without Horror, to calm your Fears, I would this Minute wed him; but I find in myſelf ſuch an Antipathy at the Mention of his Name, that I think it would be the Height of Iniquity, and neither more nor leſs than wilful Perjury, to ſwear to love, honour and obey a Man for whom I have the utmoſt Averſion. Ceaſe, for God's ſake, to importune me on his Account; I have made the utmoſt Efforts on my own Mind to conquer my Averſion, with a View to your Quiet, but find it impoſſible; but I ſwear to you ſolemnly, to try to root Sir *Thomas* from my Thoughts in every Shape but as the Son of my Benefactreſs; and whether I ſucceed in that Attempt on myſelf or not, yet by my Hopes of Happineſs, I promiſe never to give him the leaſt Encouragement, or enter into any Engagement without your Knowledge. This, Madam, is all I can ſay to make you eaſy on that ſcore; but if ſtill any Doubts remain, pray let me retire to ſome remote Corner of the World, where I may paſs my Days in praying for your Happineſs, and where I may be out of the Reach of making you uneaſy.

She ſpoke this with ſo moving and compaſſionate an Accent, that Lady *Bountiful*

was much affected.—No, my dear *Charlotte*, you ſhall never leave me; I am perfectly ſecure in your Virtue, and truſt to your Promiſes; chear up your Spirits, and be aſſured that the Sacrifice you make me endears you to my Affections, and that it ſhall be the whole Study of my Life to make you happy, by making ſuch Proviſion for you when I am gone, as may put you out of the Reach of Dependence, and entitle you to a Match worthy your Merit.——Miſs would have made a Reply to this generous Promiſe, but the Lady quickly left the Room, and returned to the Doctors with the Succeſs of this Converſation, and profeſſed herſelf quite eaſy in her Mind, and determined, ſo long as ſhe was quite ſecure of Miſs, of whom ſhe did not now entertain the leaſt Doubt, to give herſelf no Trouble about Sir *Thomas*'s Sentiments, but to permit him to act as he pleaſed; believing, that as long as he found no Encouragement from the young Lady, that his Flaſh of Paſſion would ſoon cool of itſelf, and perhaps the ſooner, that it met with no Oppoſition from thoſe he moſt expected it; for it is obſervable in moſt paſſionate People, that Contradiction makes them obſtinate and tenacious of their Reſolves, whereas when they are left to waſte the

the first Fury without Opposition, they soon grow indifferent about what before ingrossed all their Faculties.

CHAP. III.

Containing a remarkable Dream of Miss Summers's ; *and another Conversation between her and Sir* Thomas.

WHEN Lady *Bountiful* left Miss *Summers*'s Room, that young Lady had Time to reflect on the Unhappiness of her Situation. She plainly understood, that Lady *Bountiful* dreaded the Effects of her Son's Affection for her, and that whatever Confidence she placed in her at present, yet that every trifling Accident would give Birth to her Fears, and expose her to daily Vexation ; she judged that Sir *Thomas* would importune her, and doubted the Strength of her own Heart to reject him in such a manner as to give no Room for Hope, and she suspected that Mr. *Crofts* would take Advantage of her Situation, and urge his detested Proposals, and that probably it might breed a Quarrel between him and the hasty Sir *Thomas*. All these Things she revolved in her own Mind, and could figure to herself

no Proſpect but that of the greateſt Unhappineſs, nor could think of any Scheme to extricate herſelf from theſe Difficulties. She paſſed the Remainder of the Day in great Perplexity, and almoſt fretted herſelf into a Fever. When Night came, and ſhe hoped that Sleep would reſtore the Tranquillity of her Mind, her anxious Thoughts kept her awake till near Morning, when ſhe fell into a Slumber, where the ever wakeful Imagination preſented to her Fancy Dreams more irkſome than her waking Thoughts.

She fancied at firſt ſhe ſaw herſelf in the Midſt of a delightful Valley, adorned with all the Beauties of a rural Landſchape, and was pleaſing herſelf with the beautiful Scenes of flowery Meads, Woods, Groves, and ſilver Streams, that watered the verdant Proſpect in a thouſand winding Meanders; when, all of a ſudden, the Scene ſhifted, and ſhe found herſelf on the Brink of a hideous craggy Precipice, environed on all Sides with Briars, except one which overlooked a dreadful Lake, that ſhewed itſelf at the Diſtance of at leaſt a thouſand Fathoms perpendicular. She ſtood ſo near the Brink of the dreadful Precipice, that ſhe was afraid every Moment, that the Wind, which blew a Hurricane, would tumble her headlong

long down. She fancied the Ground under her Feet to be ready to give way, and ſaw nothing to lay hold on but prickly Briars and Thorns, which tore her Hands as often as ſhe attempted to lay hold on them; but notwithſtanding the horrible Anguiſh to which that put her, yet ſhe choſe rather to keep her Hold of them, than to venture falling down the horrid Precipice. She continued ſome Minutes in this miſerable Situation, when, to heighten the Calamity, ſhe imagined ſhe ſaw Mr. *Crofts* and Sir *Thomas* running to her, with each a drawn Dagger, which, by their Looks and Motions, they ſeemed to threaten to plunge into her Boſom. She expected every Moment the fatal Blow, or to be tumbled, in avoiding it, into the Abyſs below, when ſhe heard a Voice cry out, Fly, fly, Miſs *Summers*, or you are undone. The Dread of the Word Undone, and the Impoſſibility of flying from the Spot ſhe was in, threw her into ſuch a Pannic, that ſhe waked with a great Shriek, and awakened Mrs. *Margery*, who ever ſince the Attempt by Mr. *Crofts*, lay in the Cloſet on the Inſide Miſs *Summers*'s Room. The old Woman, imagining ſome Miſchief was afloat, ſtarted out of the Cloſet in her Shift, and ran to Miſs *Summers*'s Bed-Side, who, though awake, had not yet recovered

from the Agony of her Dream, and allowed Mrs. *Margery* to call her two or three Times before ſhe could anſwer her.——Oh! Mrs. *Margery*, I have been in the moſt frightful Dream I ever had in my Life; my Hair yet ſtands an end with the Horror of it: I thought, among other horrible Things I ſaw, that Mr. *Crofts* and Sir *Thomas* were going to plunge their Daggers into my Boſom.— Phoh, phoh, ſays *Margery*, is that all; I thought one of them, at leaſt, had been here, ready to plunge a Dagger, or ſomething elſe; but I warrant neither of them will hurt you. It is a Sign, Child, that they both love you; but you need not have dreamed that, they have told you as much broad awake. Come, compoſe your ſelf, and go to ſleep, and dream of ſomething more pleaſant than Daggers.

The old Woman went to Bed a little fretted that ſhe had been waked only with a ſilly Dream, and left Miſs *Summers* as little ſatisfied with her Explanation of the horrid Viſion, which made ſuch Impreſſion on her Spirits, that ſhe could not ſhut her Eyes but ſome Images occurred to her Imagination, the frequent Repetition of it, and its always ending with the Words, *Fly, or you are undone!* made her believe (who had no contemptible

temptible Notion of Dreams) that this was ſomething more than mere Illuſion or Force of Imagination.

She got up next Morning very little refreſhed with her Night's Reſt, and under the utmoſt Uneaſineſs about her Dream, which ſhe could not baniſh from her Thoughts. She turned it over in her Mind in all poſſible Shapes, and endeavoured to explain it according to the Skill ſhe had in that Kind of Divination, but her diſordered and perplexed State of Mind could ſuggeſt nothing to her, but that it portended ſome imminent Danger that threatened her, which ſhe had no other Way to avoid but by Flight.

She came down to Breakfaſt, but without that Chearfulneſs in her Looks ſhe uſed to wear; a heavy Melancholy ſat brooding in her Countenance, her Cheeks wore a livid Paleneſs inſtead of that natural Bloom which uſed to adorn them, and her Eyes had loſt their natural Vivacity, and ſtood motionleſs in their Sockets; in ſhort, in ſpite of all her Art to conceal her inward Uneaſineſs, the Alteration was viſible to all the Company. Sir *Thomas* ſaw it, imagined it owing to ſomething that had paſſed between his Mother

ther and her on his Account; he took fire on the bare Imagination, looked firſt at Miſs *Summers*, and then at his Mother, with all the Marks of Diſcontent in his Countenance. Mr. *Crofts* attributed her Chagrine to his Preſence, and out of Complaiſance left the Room before Breakfaſt was half finiſhed, and Lady *Bountiful* herſelf was in Pain till ſhe was alone with her, to find out the Cauſe of a Grief which ſat ſo viſible in her Countenance. When the Gentlemen withdrew, Lady *Bountiful* with great Tenderneſs aſked her what was the Matter with her, if any thing new had happened ſince laſt Night to give her Uneaſineſs: She would have concealed the real Cauſe, but being preſſed by the Lady *Bountiful*, ſhe at laſt related her Dream in all its Circumſtances, and how heavy it ſat upon her Mind, and in the Concluſion begged that ſhe might be permitted to make a Viſit to a Relation of Lady *Bountiful*'s, who lived about twenty Miles off, who had expreſſed a great Friendſhip for her, and had often importuned her to paſs two or three Months at her Houſe. She ſaid, ſhe hoped in that Time ſhe might be reſtored to her former Tranquillity of Mind, and that at leaſt her Abſence would force her from the Dread ſhe had of Mr. *Crofts*, and oblige him to return to *London*, who ſtaid at *Bounty-Park*

Park only to proſecute his Suit with her. Lady *Bountiful* endeavoured to argue her out of her Conceit of the Dream, telling her it was nothing but the Effect of her Perplexity of Mind, occaſioned by the preſent State of her Circumſtances: But when ſhe could not entirely remove her Prepoſſeſſions, ſhe began to yield to her Propoſal of paying a Viſit for a few Weeks to her Relation; but all of a ſudden ſhe recollected that that Lady had often mentioned how happy Sir *Thomas* would be in ſuch a Wife as Miſs *Summers*, and how generous it would be in a Man of his Fortune to marry a Woman whoſe Merit by much counter-ballanced the greateſt Fortune he could have with one leſs deſerving. This Thought occurring to Lady *Bountiful*, determined her againſt permitting Miſs *Summers* to go where Sir *Thomas* would be encouraged in his Deſigns, and at the ſame time ſhe began to entertain ſome Suſpicion that this Viſit was concerted between Sir *Thomas* and Miſs, with a View the better to deceive her Watchfulneſs, therefore ſhe told her on ſecond Thoughts, it would be better to ſtay at Home, and to make Uſe of her Reaſon to combat the Impreſſions of a diſordered Fancy, and that there was no Place ſhe could be ſo ſecure from Danger as in her Houſe,

where

where ſhe was ſure every one of the Family were ſo much in her Intereſt as to do all in their Power to protect her, and to divert her Melancholy. Miſs urged her Viſit with ſome Warmth, till Lady *Bountiful* let fall ſome Hints as if ſhe thought it a Plot; then ſhe dropped it, but could not help leaving the Room with this Exclamation: Good God! to what am I deſtin'd, when the Means I propoſe to fortify my Virtue, and clear my Innocence, is interpreted as a Deſign to deſtroy both?

She went from thence to her Chamber, where ſhe found Sir *Thomas* at high Words with Mrs. *Margery*, who had been offering her Advice, to deſiſt his Pretenſions to Miſs, and not to diſoblige his Mamma, by marrying one ſo much beneath him. Sir *Thomas* reſented her officious Care, and gave the old Houſekeeper ſome Epithets which inflamed her Choler. When Miſs appeared, they dropped the Diſcourſe, and Miſs, on Sight of Sir *Thomas*, changed Colour, and would have left the Room; but the Baronet catched hold of her Hand ——No, my dear Miſs, you ſhall not leave me, I muſt be acquainted with the Cauſe of that deep Sorrow that covers your lovely Countenance—— and pointing to Mrs. *Margery* to retire, ſhe went

went into the Cloſet, and he proceeded—— Tell me, my Angel, added he, from whence proceeds this Melancholy? Am I the unhappy Cauſe, has my wiſe Mamma ſaid any Thing further to ruffle your Temper; tell me, I conjure you, what I can do to reſtore you to your wonted Temper.——That I'm afraid, replied the lovely Maid, is impoſſible, but nothing can contribute more towards it, than your behaving towards me in the ſame Manner we have lived together from our Infancy, and that you give your Mother no Offence on my Account: This may reſtore the Peace of the Family, and in Time may diſſipate the Uneaſineſs I feel at giving Pain to thoſe whom I owe more than my Exiſtence, and from this time forward I beg of you, Sir *Thomas*, by all the Ties of Humanity, if you value my Peace and Happineſs, that you will deſire no private Converſation with me, nor entertain any other Thoughts of me, but as a Perſon dependent on the Benevolence of your Family.——By Heavens, Miſs, you aſk Impoſſibilities; their prying Zeal has ſtole the dear Secret from my Boſom; I now proclaim it publickly, that I would not forfeit my Hopes of Felicity with you for all the Treaſures of the wealthy Eaſt. Yes, Madam, I muſt purſue you with my Paſſion till I have melted

melted down that frozen Virtue of yours into a Flame as violent as my own. I owe Duty and Reſpect to my Mother, but I owe ſomething to my own Happineſs and eternal Peace, which has no other Object but you. Do you think, that in Compliance with the capricious Fondneſs of a Parent, I can wed myſelf to one I hate, for the ſake of a paltry Addition to my Fortune, already ſufficient to gratify my moſt luxurious Wiſhes? No, my dear *Charlotte*, I find more ſolid Bliſs in this Hand when given from the Heart, than all the Treaſures of *Peru* and *Mexico* can yield me: Give me Leave then to repeat my Vows, to ſooth you with my fond Paſſion and Hopes, that ſome time or other you will bleſs me with a Return of Love and Joy.—— Never think of it, Sir *Thomas*, replied Miſs *Summers* ſtruggling from his Hand, Heaven and my Duty has laid invincible Bars between us, were you dearer to my Eyes, than the Smiles of a Firſt-born to a tender Parent; were my Peace and Happineſs here bound up in your Affection, yet by all that's ſacred —— Hold, for Heaven's ſake, Madam, interrupting her, don't ſwear the raſh Oath, unleſs you mean to ſtab me at your Feet, or ſtrike me motionleſs with the unhallowed Sound: I can gueſs what you would add; yes,

yes, I know what your peeviſh Virtue would ſay, that you would chuſe to be wretched rather than make me happy. But it is I muſt be wretched; may Peace and Happineſs attend your Steps, and may you be for ever a Stranger to the racking Torments of a hopeleſs Paſſion ſuch as I now feel: But tell me, thou cruel virtuous Maid, ſure you may yield this ſmall Comfort to a deſpairing Wretch, to inform me, if thoſe Bars, thoſe Obſtacles of Duty were removed, what Reception would my Affection meet; do but tell me that you but wiſh that they were removed, and I ſhall be bleſſed beyond Conception, and enabled to wait with Patience till Providence is pleaſed to crown our mutual Loves.——The Queſtion, Sir *Thomas*, is needleſs, as it is morally impoſſible that they ever ſhould, ſearch no further, but give me this Proof of the Sincerity of your Friendſhip, to entertain me no more with your Paſſion. Reaſon and Senſe tells me that I ſhould not hear it, and I have promiſed ſacredly to your Mother never to give you the leaſt Encouragement; therefore, unleſs that Paſſion you ſpeak of can prompt you to make me for ever wretched, you will baniſh it your Thoughts, and permit me to enjoy all the Tranquillity my wretched Circumſtances are capable of.——Sir *Thomas* ſtood amazed,

amazed, unable to ſpeak one Word for ſome Minutes.——Is it ſo then? recovering as from a Reverie, Nature has conſpired againſt me, and ſhe that ought to ſtudy my Peace and Happineſs, is determined on my Ruin. No more, Madam, ſhall I trouble you, ſince I know to whom I owe my Miſery: But from this Moment adieu all natural Ties, farewel all Thoughts of Mother, Friends and Relations: What are they all to me, while they make me wretched? I will baniſh myſelf your Sight, and take Refuge in ſome more hoſpitable Part of the World; for, Oh Miſs! while I am near you, I cannot live without pouring out my Soul before you, and ſince you deny me that poor Comfort in Complaiſance to a capricious Parent, I ſhall not diſturb your Quiet; but mark the End of it, you may perhaps repent when too late, that you made, or at leaſt that you obſerved your Promiſe ſo rigorouſly.—— This he uttered in ſo dejected a Tone and Air, that if he had not left the Room, Miſs *Summers* might have relented, and ſaid ſomething to have calmed the Agony in which he appeared.

She threw herſelf upon the Bed, and ſhed a Torrent of Tears, curſed her Fate a thouſand Times, that ſhe ſhould be the innocent Cauſe

Cauſe of ſo much Uneaſineſs as ſhe foreſaw this unhappy Affair would breed in the Family. ——Good God! what ſhall I do? To what Hand turn me? Were I alone the unhappy Sufferer, I could bear it with Patience; but when I think what may be the Conſequence of the dear Youth's raſh Reſolves, and how I ſhall be curſed by all his Relations, if any thing but Good happens to him. My Mind is diſtracted. Oh! teach me, ſome pitying Angel, how to ſteer my Courſe in this diſmal Labyrinth. If I ſooth his Hopes, I act againſt my Duty, and betray the Confidence repoſed in my Promiſes. If I continue to obſerve the Conduct which Reaſon, and my dear Benefactreſs, dictate to me, ſomething fatal may enſue from the Raſhneſs of his Temper. Which ever Way I turn me, I ſee Danger round me; but I muſt let Truth and Virtue guide my Actions, and leave all Events to Divine Providence.

Mrs. *Margery*, who had her Ear all this while fixed cloſe to the Key-Hole of the Cloſet, and liſtened to every Word that paſſed, obſerving by this Soliloquy that Sir *Thomas* was gone, ventured out from her Retreat, and endeavoured to comfort the fair Mourner; but the Caſe was too intricate

cate for her to be capable of giving her any Advice; and beſides, ſhe was in a Hurry to leave her, in order to acquaint Lady *Bountiful* with all that had paſſed. That Lady, when ſhe heard the Converſation repeated, was charmed with the Steadineſs of Miſs's Behaviour, but much alarmed with the Menaces which dropped from Sir *Thomas*, and prodigiouſly perplexed how to behave in ſuch a Manner as not to drive him to Extreams. A Cabinet Council was ſummoned, at which both the Spiritual and Temporal Doctors aſſiſted; but nothing could be fixed on, that promiſed any Succeſs, to ſettle the important Point, and broke up in a Sort of Confuſion, on Dr. *Burton*'s dropping a Hint, that he did not think the Affair merited ſo much Conſideration; that, for his Part, the Queſtion ſeemed to be only, Whether Sir *Thomas* ſhould marry a Woman of intrinſic Worth and Excellence, without a Portion, on whom he had fixed his Hopes of Happineſs, or marry one with a large Fortune, with whom he muſt be for ever miſerable. —— Lady *Bountiful* did not like the State of the Queſtion, and adjourned the Debate, alledging, that ſhe ſaw they were all combined in encouraging her ungracious Son to diſobey her, in a Point of the laſt Importance, and to diſgrace himſelf

and

and Family with a handſome, proud-ſpirited Beggar.—As ſhe uttered theſe Words, Sir *Thomas* entered the Room, and took her up ſhort.—— Yes, Madam, I am determined, not to diſgrace, but to honour my Family, with that proud-ſpirited Beggar, or periſh in the Attempt; and I adviſe you to diſpoſe her willingly to liſten to my Paſſion; that is, Madam, that you will be pleaſed to make it your Requeſt that ſhe accept of the Offers I make her. I give you twenty-four Hours to bring it about; if I find any Demur from your Oppoſition to my Inclinations after that Time, remember you have only yourſelf to blame for what follows: I'll allow you, Madam, to diſpoſe of my Eſtate, manage that as you will, you may chuſe Tutors, Horſes or Hounds for me, but I'll chuſe a Wife for myſelf, ſince mine is the Happineſs or Miſery of that State, and which all your Foreſight, aided with Millions, cannot enſure without a previous Union of Affections.—— Lady *Bountiful* would not have permitted him to have gone on ſo long, but that ſhe was ſilent with Rage: He ſaw the Storm approaching, and left the Room without waiting her Reply, and immediately took Horſe, leaving Word with the Porter he would not be at Home that Night.

Though

Though Lady *Bountiful* had as much Command of her Temper as moſt Women, yet on this Occaſion her Rage exceeded moderate Bounds: The Inſolence of her Son appeared intolerable. yet the greateſt Part of her Anger was vented againſt the innocent Cauſe of all this Rout, and ſhe was withheld, not without ſome Violence, from going up to her Chamber, and turning her that Minute out of Doors: But the Doctors found Means to bring her to a little more Reaſon, and to convince her, that that was the only Method ſhe could take to force her Son to marry her out of a mere Point of Honour; and that ſhe had no Hopes of diſappointing his Deſigns, but by obſerving Meaſures with Miſs, at leaſt, till they could learn what theſe Menaces of Sir *Thomas* imported, of which at preſent they had no Idea, unleſs he meant to carry her off by Force, which would be an effectual Method to make Miſs his Enemy for ever, if ſhe acted conſiſtent with her Behaviour to *Crofts* on a like Occaſion.

I think it was Dr. *Burton* who made this Remark, which he mentioned at a Time when Mrs. *Margery* was preſent, and ſhe, out of her great Zeal, went that Minute up to Miſs *Summers*, and acquainted her, that Sir *Thomas* had certainly an Intention to carry her off by Force. If

If that unhappy Lady was in Perplexity before, her Agonies were now doubled: She conſidered, that if he ſucceeded, that ſhe would be thought privy to the Deſign, and that the whole was an Artifice to ſave Appearances with the World. She dreaded her Reputation if ſhe ſhould comply when in his Power; believed that Compliance would be explained to her Diſadvantage, and ſhe now began to think ſeriouſly, that ſhe could propoſe to herſelf but ſmall Hopes of Happineſs with a Man whoſe Temper was always in Extremes, for ever in a Tempeſt, and ſo eaſily inflamed to the moſt deſperate Attempts. She ſaw it was in vain to aſk Leave to retire from the Family for ſome Time, as that would now be looked upon as favouring Sir *Thomas*'s Deſigns, as it was the Day before. She had no Friend to adviſe with, they were all Creatures either of Sir *Thomas*, or the Lady's, and tho' all in the Family would have riſked their Lives for her on any other Account, yet where theſe were concerned, ſhe had no Hopes that their Advice would be diſintereſted. She ſpent moſt Part of the Day in theſe uneaſy Reflections, and deſired being excuſed going down to Dinner.

That ſame Afternoon Mr. *Crofts* received an Expreſs from *London*, acquainting him that a Relation of his, who had been his Guardian during his Minority, and in the Receipt of the Rents of his Eſtate while he was on his Travels, and with whom he had not yet made a final Settlement of the Accounts betwixt them, was at the Point of Death. It is more than probable that Mr. *Crofts*, who ſaw plainly that Miſs *Summers*'s Averſion to him was ſo ſtrongly rooted, that he had but little Hopes of prevailing in his Suit, eſpecially in Oppoſition to Sir *Thomas*; I ſay, it is more than probable that he was glad of this Excuſe to quit the Houſe: He communicated the Contents of his Letters to Lady *Bountiful*, and told her the Neceſſity he was under of ſetting out immediately, and expreſſed his Concern, that he had not the Pleaſure of taking Leave of Sir *Thomas* before he went, and begged that he might be permitted to pay his Compliments to Miſs *Summers*. Lady *Bountiful* acquieſced in the Neceſſity of his going, and ſent up one of the Footmen to acquaint Miſs *Summers*, that Mr. *Crofts* deſired to wait of her in her Chamber. That young Creature, who had been but too much perplexed with Sir *Thomas*'s Viſit, and her Mind too full of Sorrow to need any Addition,

ex-

excuſed herſelf from ſeeing him on Pretence of her Indiſpoſition, believing, as the Footman had told her nothing of his Intention of going away, that the Subject of his Viſit would be the old Theme, which ſhe was in no Diſpoſition to liſten to. He was obliged to ſubmit, begged Lady *Bountiful* to offer her his Compliments, and if poſſible, to endeavour to remove the Prejudice ſhe had conceived againſt him, and took Horſe about ſix o'Clock in the Evening, in order to reach that Night the Stage, where he might take Poſt-Horſes for *London*.

As Evening approached, Miſs *Summers* grew ſtill more alarmed, as judging, that perhaps that very Night ſome Attempt might be made upon her.

Sometimes, when Nature weary with the melancholy Scene would ſooth the tormenting Thoughts with ſome Gleam of Pleaſure, ſhe would figure to herſelf Sir *Thomas* at her Feet, breathing out the ſofteſt and kindeſt Wiſhes, and excuſing the Violence he was obliged to uſe to obtain her, by the Obſtinacy of his Mother, who capriciouſly denied her Conſent to their mutual Happineſs. She could for a Moment permit her Heart to dilate itſelf with the pleaſing Dream of

poſſeſſing the only Man ſhe could love, one ſhe had accuſtomed herſelf to think of with innocent Pleaſure, and would flatter herſelf that the Violence uſed would hold her excuſed to Lady *Bountiful*; and that ſhe, who had uſed ſo many Arguments in Favour of *Crofts*, founded on the Cauſe of Reputation, would admit their Force when applied to the Caſe of her Son: But her watchful Virtue ſoon rouſed her from theſe flattering Dreams, and ſhe chid her own Heart for tolerating Thoughts ſo remote from what both her Duty and Virtue required, and returned again to torment herſelf with the Apprehenſion of what ſhe ſhould ſuffer ſhould Sir *Thomas* make an Attempt of that Kind. As the Night drew on her Fears increaſed, and nothing appeared more terrible to her than the Time ſhe expected the Family to go to Reſt, when it was moſt probable the Attempt would be made, if at all.

At this Time the Dream, mentioned in the foregoing Part of this Chapter, occurred to her Memory with all its frightful Circumſtances, and comparing it with what ſhe thought ſhe had Reaſon to fear, ſhe concluded that ſhe would be wanting to herſelf, if ſhe did not take the Advice it ſo often repeated, *To fly from Ruin*.

Her

Her Apprehenſions were ſo ſtrong, that ſhe ſoon determined on a ſudden Flight; but where ſhe was to ſeek a Retreat was what was not ſo eaſily determined. She knew no Perſon in that Country at whoſe Houſe ſhe could be concealed, or who perhaps would enter ſo far into her unhappy Circumſtances, as to endeavour to hide her from the Search that might be made after her. But by this Time the Family were all gone to Reſt, and a profound, and to her a melancholy, Silence reigned every where: Even Mrs. *Margery* in the Cloſet, who uſed to entertain her with the Stories and Adventures of her Youth, fell faſt aſleep the Moment ſhe laid her Head to the Pillow, and by her Snoring ſeemed to be in a deeper Sleep than ordinary. The Ruſtling of the Trees that ſurrounded the Houſe, and now and then the barking of *Towſer*, the Watch Dog in the Yard, at Travellers paſſing to and fro, threw her into the moſt dreadful Panic, as believing every ſuch Accident the Forerunner of her Ruin. In ſhort, her Fears grew upon her ſo quick, that ſhe put an End to all Deliberation about where ſhe was to go, but determined at once to quit the Houſe, and truſted that Providence would direct her Steps to ſome Aſylum, where ſhe might

find Relief from theſe anxious Thoughts which now haunted her Mind, and repreſented her Peace, her Virtue and Reputation in the moſt imminent Danger.

Thus reſolved, ſhe began to prepare for her Journey; moſt of her Cloaths lay in a Cloaths-Cheſt in the Cloſet, where ſhe could not enter for fear of waking Mrs. *Margery*, whom ſhe now wiſhed might ſleep as ſound as poſſible, and if ſhe could have come at them, it is more than probable ſhe would not have taken many of them, as a large Bundle would incommode her Flight. She contented herſelf then with the Night-Gown ſhe had on, which happened to be a brown Silk, and another blue and white Linnen, which ſhe tied up in a Napkin with ſome Linnen. She had her Watch, ſome few Trinkets and Jewels of no great Value, and about twenty Guineas in Caſh, which ſhe ſewed up in one of her Petticoats, and having wrote a Letter which ſhe left in her Dreſſing-Box, ſhe put on her Cloak and Cap, and began to take her laſt Leave of that Apartment where ſhe had paſſed the happy Hours of her Infant State.—Farewel thou once peaceful Abode, may Peace, Joy and eternal Happineſs attend the generous Owner; may none belonging to this worthy Fa-

Family know the Miſeries I now feel, but may their Hearts be filled with Peace, and may the Prayers of the Widow, the Poor and the fatherleſs Orphan bring down on their Heads Part of thoſe Bleſſings here which muſt be the future Reward of ſo much Virtue and Benevolence hereafter. Oh, thou eternal Being, who has guided the Steps of my Youth hitherto, and has inſtilled into my Mind the Principles of Virtue, and a Dependence on thee, guide my Steps in the Ways of Peace, protect my Innocence from Wrongs, and endue me with Conſtancy to bear all that thy Providence deſigns to inflict upon me.——A Flood of Tears followed. She looked wiſhfully round the Room, like one bidding a final Adieu to his beſt Friends, and took up the Candle, opened the Chamber-Door very ſoftly, and went down into the Back-Parlour, which had a Door into the Pleaſure-Garden. As ſhe came to the Door, ſhe put out the Candle, ſet it down in the Chimney, and went out. The Moon ſhone bright, as propitious to an Action undertaken in Defence of Virtue and Innocence, and directed her to a Back-door which opened into the Park, of which ſhe had the Key; ſhe opened it, went out, and ſhut it behind her, and put the Key under the Door. Now ſhe thought herſelf

ſafe, and ſat her down under an old Oak, about a hundred Yards from the Door, where ſhe uſed often to ſit and read in Times of peaceful Proſperity, and began to reflect with greater Calmneſs where ſhe ſhould direct her Steps. But as it is almoſt Morning, the Reader muſt excuſe me if I return to Bed and take a Nap, after the Fatigue of this Chapter, before I proceed any further; if he is not ſo diſpoſed, he may entertain himſelf with Miſs *Summers* under the old Oak, till I am at Leiſure to conduct her further on her Journey; for there I have caſt a Spell upon her, that ſhe cannot move one Step without my Leave.

CHAP. IV.

Containing the Alarm at Lady Bountiful's *Houſe on Miſs* Summers's *being miſſed.*

IN the Morning, Mrs. *Margery* got up at her uſual Hour, and took no Notice of not finding Miſs *Summers* in the Chamber, as ſhe was generally an early Riſer, and uſed often to go out a walking for an Hour or two before Breakfaſt, if the Weather permitted. When the Bell rung for Prayers, and Breakfaſt was afterwards ſerved up in Lady

Lady *Bountiful*'s Bed-Chamber, and Miſs appeared at neither, the Family was under ſome Surprize, but as yet they never ſuſpected an Elopement, but fancied ſhe might be viſiting ſome of Lady *Bountiful*'s ſick Patients, which Amuſement ſhe was very fond of.

About one o'Clock Sir *Thomas* returned, and as ſoon as he alighted, ran up to Miſs *Summers*'s Chamber, where he was told ſhe had not been ſeen all that Morning, and that none of the Family knew what was become of her. As Lovers Fears are ſoon kindled, he was not ſo patient as the reſt, but concluded ſome Misfortune had happened in his Abſence, and at leaſt that his Mother had on purpoſe ſent her out of the Way. He went in a Rage to Lady *Bountiful*'s Apartment, and in very indecent Terms, urged her to tell him what was become of her. The Lady *Bountiful* was incenſed at her Son's undutiful Behaviour, but more alarmed at the Thoughts of Miſs *Summers* having left the Houſe. She proteſted to him, that ſhe knew nothing of her going away, and could not be perſuaded that ſhe had taken ſuch a Step, eſpecially ſince ſhe has now nothing to fear from Mr. *Crofts*,—who went, added ſhe, laſt Night for *London*, with a

Reſolution, I believe, to forget her.—*Crofts* gone? returned Sir *Thomas* in a Rage—— then I am undone indeed! It is all a Plot to ruin me; you have ſeduced her to his Purpoſe, and he has certainly carried her off: But, by Heavens! if they are above Ground, I'll find them out, and ſacrifice that treacherous Raviſher to my juſt Revenge; he ſhall not long triumph in thoſe Charms in which I placed my ſole Hopes of Happineſs. No! were I to meet him at the Altar, there I would plunge my Sword into his falſe Heart, and drench their ſtolen *Hymen* in Blood and Revenge. Is this the coy Virgin, that could not hear his Name without Horror but Yeſterday-morning; yet in the Evening, in the Dead of Night, can ſteal to his hated Arms, and truſt her boaſted Virtue to a midnight Raviſher: How have I been their Dupe, their eaſy Tool: By Heavens! the whole Sex is but one entire Compoſition of Cozenage and Diſſimulation. But it is you, Madam, I have to blame for this Misfortune, which poiſons all my future Enjoyments: Without your Aid he could never have prevailed; but her miſtaken Notions of Duty and Gratitude to you, has betrayed her and me to Wretchedneſs and Miſery. But I trifle away the precious Moments: I go, Madam; and never expect

to

to hear more of me, till I have overtaken the Runaways.

Lady *Bountiful* ſtepped between him and the Door, and after trying in vain the Authority of a Parent to ſtay his Raſhneſs, ſhe condeſcended ſo far to the Impetuoſity of his Temper, as to endeavour to ſooth him; begged him to be calm, and that ſhe would join with him in ſearch of Miſs *Summers*, who if ſhe was gone at all, was not certainly gone with Mr. *Crofts*, but perhaps to avoid him, and for Fear any Conſtraint ſhould be laid upon her to accept of his Propoſals;—— for, added ſhe, Miſs *Summers* knew nothing laſt Night of his Intention to go; ſhe was not out of her Chamber from the Time you left us at Breakfaſt, and refuſed to admit of a Viſit from him when he intended to have taken his Leave. But it is poſſible all our Fears are in vain; ſhe is perhaps only gone to viſit Farmer *Moſſman*'s Daughter who is very bad, and you know was her great Favourite: I'll ſend *Thomas*, the Poſtilion, there immediately to ſatisfy ourſelves, before we expoſe the Girl, by alarming the Family and Neighbours with a Notion of her running away.

Sir *Thomas* began to be a little pacified, and to form ſome Hopes that his amorous Affairs were not in ſo bad a Way as he at firſt imagined; but he was not long left to doubt the worſt that had happened to him, for in about ten Minutes Mrs. *Margery* came, in a great Flutter, into the Room.—Alack-a-day, Madam, what ſhall I tell you? What do you think has happened to poor Miſs *Summers?*—To Miſs *Summers!* Mrs. *Margery?* What has happened to her? cried Sir *Thomas*, with all the Tokens of Deſpair in his Countenance; for Heaven's Sake, tell me quickly what it is, before my foreboding Heart has Time to form Notions to itſelf that may make me mad.——Lord have Mercy upon us, Sir *Thomas*, ſays *Margery*, don't be in ſuch a frightful Hurry; I'll tell you as faſt as I can; but, leſt I ſhould be too ſlow, for now indeed I cannot ſpeak ſo faſt as I was wont to do when I was young, ſee here this Letter, I found it when I was looking for a Comb in her Dreſſing-Box; it is directed to her Ladyſhip, and written with the dear Creature's own Hand.—Sir *Thomas* ſnatched it haſtily out of her Hand, while ſhe was handing it to Lady *Bountiful*, and opened it, it having no Seal, and read the Contents.

Miſs

Miſs *Summers*'s Letter to Lady *Bountiful.*

Much honoured Madam,

HOW much I owe to your generous Bounty, to the tender Care you have taken of me, ſince the happy Hour that Providence caſt me in your Way, is too much for Words to expreſs; but the tender grateful Sentiments, which ſuch benevolent Uſage inſpires, fill my Heart, and occupy all my Faculties. The all-ſeeing Eye, that governs all Events, knows with what awful Reverence I eſteem your Ladyſhip, and how inceſſantly I pray to him to teach me, how I can merit the Continuance of your Protection, and make Returns ſuitable to the many Bleſſings he has beſtowed on me by your Means. To pleaſe you has been my conſtant Study, and how to avoid offending has employed all my Thoughts, ever ſince I had the Uſe of Reaſon. But in this Step of my Conduct, perhaps, I have erred; yet God is my Judge, that it is not wilfully, and that I have been prompted to leave your Family for no other Reaſon, but to preſerve my Innocence from Danger, and your Ladyſhip's Peace unviolated. The unhappy Paſſion which Sir Thomas *has owned for me, is no Secret to you; nor have I concealed my Sentiments of it. It is that alone,*

Ma-

Madam, that has determined me to throw myſelf once more upon that Providence, that has ſo remarkably preſerved my Infant Years, rather than truſt myſelf where I was in Danger, from the raſh Attempts of a young Man, from the Weakneſs of my own Reſolutions, and expoſed to the continual Dread of your Ladyſhip's Diſpleaſure, ariſing from the natural Fears of a Parent for the Happineſs of an only Son. Your Care, Madam, your great Example, has inſtilled into my early Years the Notions of Virtue, the Delicacy of a Woman's Reputation. I hope then you cannot blame me for taking a Step which ſecures the juſt Fears I had of both. For this Evening I was told Sir Thomas *intended to have made uſe of Force to gain his Ends. It was then no Time to deliberate, ſince every Moment endangered my Reputation, and might, in ſpite of me, make me acceſſory to diſturb the Peace of my Benefactreſs, for whoſe Happineſs I would willingly ſacrifice my Life.*

I know I run myſelf into Danger, and expoſe myſelf to a thouſand Perils, which the bare Thought of ſhocks my Soul; yet when I know that then I can only ſuffer alone, and that I have freed your Ladyſhip from the Jealouſy you had of me, I embrace chearfully,

and

and ſhall bear patiently with all that Providence, in whom alone I put my Truſt, ſhall pleaſe to inflict on me. It is needleſs to ſay I conceal where I go, ſince at preſent I have not ſo much as an Idea to what Corner of the World I ſhall ſteer my Courſe; but where-ever Heaven ſhall direct my Steps, or furniſh me with an Abode, my Hopes, my Wiſhes, my Prayers, ſhall be addreſſed for Peace and Happineſs to attend your Family. I can no more; my Fears increaſe, and I muſt bid a long and laſt Adieu to this hoſpitable Seat, and can only add, that I am, with great Reſpect,

Madam,

Your Ladyſhip's

Moſt obedient, and

moſt humble Servant,

CHARLOTTE SUMMERS.

On reading this Letter, Lady *Bountiful* melted into Tears; and to conceal the Confuſion, as well as to avoid the Upbraidings of her Son, ſhe took Advantage of the deep Study into which the Letter had thrown him, and retired to her Cloſet.

Sir

Sir *Thomas* remained like one Thunderſtruck for ſome Moments, and then fell a raving little differing from Madneſs, threatening Impoſſibilities againſt all Mankind, and ſometimes hinting to lay violent Hands on himſelf, which ſo frightened Mrs. *Margery*, who was ſtill in the Room, that ſhe went to the Door, and called Dr. *Burton* to come up for God's ſake When he came, and aſked the Cauſe of this Outcry, Sir *Thomas* told him all that had happened, and ſhewed Miſs *Summers*'s Letter.——Have not I Reaſon to be mad? All my Joys are fled, and the lovely, too, too virtuous Maid expoſed to all the Dangers of an uncharitable World for my ſake alone: Curſe on my unhappy Stars! that I could not ſmother my Paſſion, and have remained miſerable alone, and not have blaſted her Peace, and deſtroyed her Quiet with it. But what malicious Villain, what helliſh Fiend could tell her that I intended to uſe Force or Violence to the charming Maid? It is that Thought that has robbed me of all Happineſs: She is not only gone away a forlorn Fugitive ſhe knows not where, but has gone with the damn'd Impreſſion that I am a Villain, a baſe Raviſher, and an Enemy to her ſpotleſs Innocence: It is that Thought

Thought, dear Doctor, that diſtracts me, that the lovely Maid muſt abhor me, and never think of me but as the Cauſe of her Undoing, and a Villain unworthy of her ſmalleſt Eſteem: Oh that ſome pitying Angel would teach me where to find her, that I might lay open my whole Soul before her; that I might convince her how much my Soul abhors the Thoughts of brutal Violence, and with what a holy Flame I adore her ſpotleſs Worth.

Dr. *Burton* was ſo amazed and concerned at the unexpected News, that he took very little Notice of what Sir *Thomas* ſaid, or the Concern he was in: He could ſcarce refrain from Tears, ſo much the Fate of that unhappy young Creature affected him. He was going out of the Room without ſpeaking a Word, when Sir *Thomas* pulled him by the Sleeve:——What is the Meaning of this Silence? Are you privy to her Eſcape? Tell me this Inſtant (laying his Hand upon his Sword) where ſhe is, or, by all that's Sacred! this Moment is the laſt you breathe: I know ſhe always truſted you more than any Body elſe; ſhe could not venture on an Action of this Kind without ſome Advice, and I ſee by your Confuſion you know the Place of her Retreat.

This

This Action of the Baronet's raiſed the Doctor from that profound Melancholy into which the News had thrown him.——— Forbear, raſh young Man, it is the impetuous Fury of your Temper that has hurried the unhappy Girl to this Act of Deſpair. Your Paſſion has undone her, and ſhe may be this Moment a Prey to ſome Night-Robber, and her Innocence expoſed to ſome luſtful Raviſher. Would to God I knew where ſhe is! Not that I would give you any Information; no, all your Threats ſhould not draw the Secret from me; but that I might protect her Innocence, and preſerve her Virtue from the Temptation of Want, Contempt and Poverty. But ſhe cannot be far off; I will go myſelf, and ſend every Way in Search of her, before ſhe can have Time to leave the County.—Forgive me, dear Doctor, replied Sir *Thomas*; pardon the Madneſs of my Thoughts; all is in Tumult within me; I can ſcarce ſpeak, act or think rationally; but I will join you in the Search of the lovely Wanderer, for without her there is not a Wretch on Earth ſo miſerable as I am.

Sir *Thomas*, the Doctor, Parſon *Goodheart* (who ſympathized, as well as the reſt, in the

the Misfortunes of the dear Runaway) and all the Servants, went different Ways to learn Tidings of the fair Fugitive. But I have not Leiſure to give you an Account of their fruitleſs Search; or the Grief that overwhelmed the whole Family, when they found her irrecoverably loſt; I am in Haſte to cloſe the Chapter, that I may return to my pretty Traveller, and conduct her through the moſt rugged Part of her Journey.

CHAP. V.

Containing the firſt Night of Miſs Summers's *Travels.*

I LEFT my lovely Pariſh Girl ſitting under an old Oak, deliberating with herſelf which Way ſhe ſhould direct her Journey. Had ſhe left the hoſpitable Roof, that ſheltered her Infant Years, to gratify ſome unruly Paſſion, in Chace of ſome favourite Swain, perhaps the Horrors of the Night, the diſmal Ruſtling of the Wind through the old Trees, the hideous Croaking of the Shriek-Owl, and a thouſand frightful Images the Fancy is apt enough, in ſuch Circumſtances, to ſuggeſt to weak Minds,

Minds, might have diſturbed her Cogitations, and rendered her very unfit to deliberate in ſuch a Place with that Calmneſs which the Importance of the Subject required: But it was otherwiſe with the lovely Wanderer; no Vice ſtained her conſcious Innocence, no unruly Paſſion blinded her Underſtanding, no ſoft-tongued, deluding Swain interpoſed between her and her Duty; ſhe fled from Vice and Danger, and left Eaſe and decent Grandeur, to preſerve her Virtue, and the Peace of a Family ſhe owed more than Life to; a Family to whom ſhe owed thoſe virtuous Sentiments, which ſupported her in calm Tranquillity, in Circumſtances which would have curdled the Blood of the boldeſt of her Sex.

Women generally pride themſelves in being timorous, and think it becomes their Sex to be frighted at a Shadow, to ſcream, and ſquall at Dangers begot only in their own Imagination; yet they can get the better of theſe polite faſhionable Fears, when ſome favourite Paſſion is to be gratified, or when under the Influence of ſome predominant Appetite. They can meet a Lover in the dark, and venture through a Church-yard or a Charnel-houſe, to indulge an

an amorous Maggot, though they would ſtart at Twilight, if they paſſed within an hundred Yards of the ſame Place, to ſay their Prayers, or perform any other Act of Religion or Charity. If a Mind contaminated with Vice, a Soul foul with luſtful Appetites, can get the better of theſe common Foibles of the Fair Sex, we need not be amazed to find that the lovely Miſs *Summers*, ſhrouded with Virtue and virtuous Principles, and ſtrongly fortified with innate Worth and Innocence, ſhould, on this Occaſion, forget to be afraid, and at once diſclaim all Belief in Witches, Fairies, Hobgoblins, and other fanciful Spectres, that haunt the Imaginations of weak and vicious Minds. Yes, ſhe did, and now that ſhe thought herſelf out of the Reach of *Crofts* and Sir *Thomas*, found her Mind at eaſe, all her Faculties alert, and capable of pondering in her own Mind, what was the propereſt Rout ſhe ſhould take, to ſhelter her from the Dangers of a Purſuit. That was the firſt Thought that employed her Mind; for ſhe was wiſe enough to imagine, that to form a Plan for her future Life, would require mature Deliberation, and was not to be adopted in a Hurry. She confined her Thoughts then to recollect, where ſhe might find a Shelter for ſome Time,

Time, till ſhe could have an Opportunity to diſpoſe of herſelf for Good.

It was in vain to think of concealing herſelf in that or the neighbouring Counties; and ſhe judged that in almoſt any Country Place ſhe would be ſoon found out; ſhe therefore determined for *London*, and as ſhe knew the Poſt-Road lay a Dozen Miles off, ſhe took a Path through the Park, which led to that Road, hoping before Morning to reach *Cowan Gathbury*, where Stages and Waggons went for *Cardigan*, and ſo on for *London*.

This Reſolution ſettled, ſhe tied her little Bundle in as ſmall Compaſs as ſhe could, put it under her Arm, and having recommended herſelf to the Protection of the Almighty, took a laſt and tender Look of that kind old Manſion, rouſed up her Spirits, which began to flag at loſing Sight of an Object ſo familiar to her Eyes, and ſo grateful to her Mind. The Thoughts of the Motives that induced her to fly, diffuſed a Chearfulneſs over the whole Mind, and ſhe nimbly got over the Stile into the high Road, which leads to the Poſt Road, and without the leaſt Mixture of Fear proceeded on her Journey for near two Hours,

in

in which Time ſhe had walked above ſix Miles, without finding herſelf the leaſt fatigued.

Hitherto the Moon ſhone bright, the Night was calm and ſerene, and ſhe met with no Turning in the Road, to puzzle her about the Way ſhe ſhould take; but now ſhe met with three croſs Roads, and ſhe had not the leaſt Notion which of them ſhe ſhould take. She had been but once or twice that Road, to viſit a Family that lived about twenty Miles off, but had never taken ſo much Notice of the Country, as to be able to judge which of theſe croſs Ways was moſt likely to be the Right; and to compleat her Misfortune, the Night began to darken and grow cloudy. She ſat down for ſome Time to think what ſhe ſhould do, and at laſt, leaving the Event to Providence, in a Caſe which left her Underſtanding nothing to decide, ſhe went on to that leaning to the Left, which ſhe thought was the Direction in which the Place ſhe was going to lay.

She had not travelled above an Hour in this Road, when ſhe fell into a long dark Lane hedged in with Woods on each Side, which made the Night Pitch-dark. It was

a

a deep Slough, that ſhe was up to the Ancles in Mud and Clay every Step ſhe took. However ſhe was not diſcouraged; ſhe went boldly on, till by the Light of the Stars ſhe could diſcern ſhe was near the End of it: But here Fear ſucceeded her Fatigue. She heard at ſome Diſtance two or three Voices, which ſhe judged to be meeting her. In all the Way ſhe had not ſo much as thought of meeting any Perſon Abroad at that Time of Night, and now that ſhe heard them approaching her, Fear ſuggeſted to her every poſſible Misfortune that could happen to an alone Woman in that diſmal Place, at that dead and ſolitary Hour.

She had but few Moments of theſe bitter Reflections (better imagined than expreſſed) when three Ruffians met her. It was juſt Moon-light enough to diſtinguiſh the Shape of Objects. They ſaw it was a Woman, and accoſted her with, D——n your B——d, you B—ch, what makes you out at this Time of Night? Come, what have you got under your Arm? Give it us; we ſhall carry it for you.——One of them taking the Bundle from her,—Ha, *Jack!* I believe we have got an unexpected Booty, to make Amends for our Diſappointment by that d—n'd Dog at Farmer *Batſon*'s. Come, my Dear, let us

us feel your Pockets; ſuch a Wench as you has no Need for Money.——They laid hold of her, and tore off her Pockets, and her Cloak and Cap; and feeling by the Ruſtling that her Gown was Silk, ſtripped her of that too. Thinking they had got all ſhe had, they carried her to the Side of the Road a little into the Thicket, and bound her Hands behind with a Cord, and faſtened that to the Root of a Tree, and was about to leave her. She had not uttered one Syllable; the Dread of ſuch a Meeting deprived her of the Uſe of Speech; an univerſal Tremor ſhook her whole Frame, and ſhe was little better than in a Swoon, when ſhe heard one of the Villains, when they were gone about ten Paces off, — By G—d, *Jack!* I have a Month's Mind to the B—ch; I believe ſhe is young; but young or old it is all the ſame in the Dark; do you ſtay here, and watch the Coaſt clear.——D——n me, but it is a good Thought; let us all have a Touch; but as ſhe is my Booty, I will begin.——No, D——n me, ſhan't you; I mentioned it firſt, and it ſhall be my Turn; let me ſee who dares contradict it.

The fair Unfortunate heard the horrid Dialect, and wiſhed for Death, or any Thing

to ſhelter her from the impending Ruin; ſhe ſtruggled to get looſe from the Tree; and finding that in vain, ſtruck her lovely Head againſt the Trunk, if poſſible to daſh her Brains out before the horrid Conteſt ſhould be over. She lifted up her Eyes to Heaven, and implored the Divine Mercy to protect her Innocence. Her Prayers were heard; Heaven is never deaf to Virtue in Diſtreſs: For the barbarous Ruffians from Words, about the Spoil, came to Blows, and continued the Combat ſo long, that ſhe could hear the Trampling of Horſes almoſt at Hand. The Villains were ſo intent upon their Quarrel, that the Horſemen were juſt upon them before they took the Alarm, which Miſs *Summers*'s Cries gave them. On hearing the Horſes near her, ſhe cried out, —For God's ſake, if you are Chriſtians, pity and ſave a Woman from Robbers and Raviſhers!—Her Voice repeated, ſtopped the Travellers, and made the Villains take to their Heels, leaving every Thing they had taken from her behind them. They ran into the thickeſt Part of the Coppice where the Horſes could not purſue them; but one of them alighted, and unbound the ſuffering Maid. She firſt with bended Knees, and Hands and Eyes uplifted, returned Thanks to God for her miraculous Eſcape, and then

in

in Words the moſt grateful and obliging, thanked her Deliverers, who happened to be a Country Farmer, who lived within two or three Miles of *Cowan Gathbury*, where ſhe was going, who was returning from a Fair, where he had been to ſell ſome Cattle. The honeſt Farmer, pleaſed with doing Good, aſked her what ſhe was, and how ſhe came to be alone at that Time of the Night. She was at ſome Loſs to frame a Lye; but ſhe made ſhift to tell him, that ſhe had been at *Carmarthen*, where ſhe had ſome Relations, and was going to *Cowan Gathbury*, in her Way to *London*, in order to get into Service; but that ſhe had been benighted, and miſſed her Way ſhe believed, for ſhe had wandered about all Night without knowing where ſhe was. The honeſt Farmer pitied her Story, gathered up the Things the Villains had left, and ſtaid till ſhe had put on her Gown and Cap, and then in a Manner as courteous as his Country Breeding had taught him, begged her to get up behind him, and that he would carry herto the *Black Lion* at *Cowan Gathbury*, where the Stage and Waggons for *London* put up, as he was to paſs by the Door in his Way Home. The Terror of what ſhe had ſo lately ſuffered was too much upon her Spirits to permit her to refuſe what the honeſt Farmer offered. By the Help of the Farmer's

Man ſhe got up behind him, and by Break of Day, or about half an Hour after it, arrived ſafe at the deſired Inn.

CHAP. VI.

Containing the Sequel of Miſs Summers's *Journey.*

AS ſhe was coming up to the Inn, it happily occurred to her, by one of thoſe Kind of Impulſes for which it is impoſſible for human Wiſdom to account, to caution the Farmer and his Man, not to mention at the Inn any thing of the Misfortune ſhe had eſcaped, leſt it ſhould expoſe her to be gazed at, which, ſhe ſaid, ſhe could not bear. The Farmer and his Man promiſed Silence on that Head, without giving themſelves any Trouble in examining her Reaſons for ſuch Conduct, which were only known to herſelf; for ſhe imagined that the Rumour of ſo uncommon an Accident would bring, not only the People of the Inn, but all their Gueſts to ſtare at her, and by that Means expoſe her to a more narrow Inſpection, than what they might make if ſhe paſſed only for an ordinary Traveller, and perhaps be a Means to diſcover what ſhe really

really was, which was ſo much her Intereſt to conceal, at leaſt till ſhe was at a greater Diſtance from *Bounty-Park*: And it was happy for her, that Chance ſuggeſted that Thought, as we ſhall ſee by the Sequel.

The Farmer, who had taken her up in the Dark, as ſhe rode behind him, had no Opportunity to make any Remark upon his Fellow Traveller; but when ſhe alighted at the Inn, and he had a full View of her Face, he was not ſo much a Clown as not to be ſtruck with ſo much Beauty.——Wauns, Miſtreſs, I think no Wonder the Rogues quarrelled about that ſweet Face, had they ſeen it in the Light as I do; Ods dickens, it is enough to ſpoil a Parſon's Preaching; ifackins, I think you are in the right, not to care to be ſtared at; if I look much longer, I ſhall forget my *Moll*. Ods Niggars, I fancy there is more in the Matter than I am aware of; but be that as it will, I'll ſee you ſafely into the Stage or Waggon before I part with you. I would not for old *Ball*, leave ſo proper a Damſel to the Hazard of ſuch another Miſchance for the World.——Miſs *Summers* bluſhed like the Morning Roſe at the Farmer's Compliment, pulled her Bonnet over her Face, and went into the Inn. The Farmer would have

had her ſit by the Side of a large Fire in the Kitchen, and pulled the Arm Chair cloſe up to it, for her to ſit in; but ſhe deſired to be excuſed, and begged to be ſhewed a Room, where ſhe might have ſome Repoſe, and deſired the Farmer to call for what he pleaſed, and ſhe would pay for it; it was but his Due, ſince he had ſaved it and her from the Ruffians. The Farmer took the Hint, and did not preſs her to ſtay in the public Room, but made the Bar-Maid, who chanced to be up earlier than ordinary that Morning, ſhew her into a neat back Parlour, and had ſome Wine mulled, and carried it in to her himſelf, and would not ſtir till ſhe had drank a little of it, and then left her to prepare to go to Bed for two or three Hours, about which Time they expected the Stage Coach would paſs.

Miſs *Summers* was highly pleaſed with the Good-nature of the Farmer, and when alone, and had Time to reflect on the imminent Danger ſhe had ſo miraculouſly eſcaped, could not help owning a particular Hand of Providence in her Deliverance, and poured out her Soul in grateful Praiſes to that Being, who alone was able to protect her helpleſs Innocence. She took her late

late Eſcape as a ſure Preſage of his future Protection; ſince ſhe imagined it impoſſible that ſhe could ever be in greater Danger, than that ſhe had been now delivered from. Cheared and ſtrengthened with this Thought, her Mind reſumed its wonted Calmneſs, and ſhe began to undreſs herſelf to go to Reſt, which Nature wanted much; when going towards the Window, which looked into the Stable-Yard, in order to draw the Window-Curtains, the firſt Object that preſented itſelf to her View was Mr. *Crofts*'s Valet de Chambre, giving Orders to ſaddle Poſt-Horſes for his Maſter with all Expedition. Had ſhe ſeen a Ghoſt, or the moſt terrible Apparition from the infernal Regions, ſhe could not be more terrified; ſhe ſtarted from the Window, and trembled every Limb of her like an Aſpin Leaf, a cold Sweat ran down her lovely Cheeks, and ſhe was ready to ſink into the Earth with Fear; for, as ſhe knew nothing of his Journey, ſhe concluded, that her Flight was ſome how diſcovered, and that this Poſting Journey was in Purſuit of her. She was in Terror leſt he ſhould find that a young Woman came into the Inn; and in Agony leſt he or his Servant ſhould ask any Queſtions of the Farmer, whoſe Prudence ſhe ſuſpected would not be capable to conceal her Sto-

ry. In ſhort, every Idea that could perplex her occurred in an Inſtant to her Memory, heightened with one more ſhocking than all the reſt, the Remembrance of what *Crofts* had attempted at *Bounty-Park*, which ſhe thought, if he diſcovered her under her preſent Circumſtances, he might again renew. To heighten her Dread, ſhe heard his Voice in the Kitchen, in Chat with the Farmer that had ſaved her, and expected every Moment that her Caſe would be the Subject of their Converſation. It is impoſſible to expreſs her Agony, and utterly impracticable for her to frame to herſelf any Scheme for her Eſcape from the preſent Danger. However, in a few Minutes ſhe had ſome Glimmering of Hope, ſhe heard the Oſtler wiſh Mr. *Crofts* a good Journey, and the Sound of the Poſting Horn going out of the Inn. Thus far ſhe thought Providence had given her a ſecond Delivery; but ſhe thought ſhe ought to make uſe of her Reaſon, as much as it was in her Power, to prevent Dangers of this kind, by her long Stay at the Inn, or keeping the public Road in her intended Journey to *London*. If ſhe could have found any Pretext to the Farmer for quitting the Inn that Minute, ſhe would have done it; but ſhe could frame no Excuſe, but what might either

either betray her Secret, or give Suſpicion that ſhe had one; therefore ſhe was conſtrained, though under the greateſt Apprehenſions, to throw herſelf for ſome Time upon the Bed; but not to reſt, for every the leaſt Noiſe alarmed her; and if ſhe but ſhut her Eyes, her wakeful Fancy repreſented Mr. *Crofts*, Sir *Thomas*, and all the Family at *Bounty-Park*, as entering her Chamber to force her back again. In this Manner ſhe continued for near three Hours, till ſhe heard all the Family were up. She then got up, rung the Bell, and deſired the Farmer might ſpeak to her. He came in obliging Haſte, and with an honeſt Warmth aſked how ſhe had reſted.——Indeed, ſays ſhe, I have not reſted at all; the Noiſe of the Houſe, and the Fright I have been in dwelt ſo much upon my Spirits, that I have not ſhut my Eyes.—— Lackaday, Miſtreſs, I am ſorry for that, replied the honeſt Farmer, you cannot ſure pretend to go forward on your Journey, without Reſt and Refreſhment; indeed you muſt not; and if your Buſineſs be not very preſſing to go forward, if you'll accept of a Bed at my Houſe, and ſuch Chear as the Country affords, good Faith and Troth you ſhall have a hearty Welcome, and my *Moll* will make much of you; if you have a Mind to ſtay a Month,

you ſhall be as quiet and ſafe as at your Mother's Houſe; do, ſweet Miſtreſs, take a Friend's Advice for once, and don't pretend to go on to a ſtrange Place, and ſtrange Company, till you are fit to travel, and till we can light of ſomebody going, who may take Care of ſuch a young Woman as you are, and protect you from rude Travellers.

As the Farmer had told her before, that his Houſe lay off the public Road, and his Offer diſcovered a plain honeſt Heart, and ſuited exactly with her Circumſtances, ſhe accepted of it with very little Ceremony; and the Farmer gave old *Ball* his Feed of Oats, and borrowed a Pillion from the Landlord of the Inn, on which ſhe was mounted, and arrived ſafe at *Hazlewood* Farm.

Moll, the Farmer's Wife, received *Hodge* (for that was the good Man's Name) and his new Gueſt with open Arms, and with as much Politeneſs as could be expected from plain Nature without Art or Diſguiſe. She conceived a great Liking to Miſs *Summers* at firſt Sight, which was much increaſed when ſhe was told the imminent Danger from whence the Huſband had reſcued her.

She

She provided in an Inſtant the beſt Things the Farm could afford, and preſſed her to take a Refreſhment, and then put her to a warm Bed, where ſhe fell into a ſound Sleep till towards Evening, and waked with her Mind at perfect Eaſe, and pleaſed that ſhe had thus far ſucceeded in her Enterprize.

When the Farmer's Wife heard her ſtirring, ſhe came into her Room, and enquired kindly after her Health, and if ſhe wanted any thing in her Power to ſupply her with. Miſs *Summers* returned the obliging Good-nature in the Woman, and told her that ſhe was doubly happy in meeting ſo accidentally with People of ſo much Good-nature and Humanity, and begged only to know when the Stage would go next for *London*, as ſhe was uneaſy to proceed on her Journey now, that by their Good-nature ſhe had recovered from the Fright into which the Diſaſter of the preceding Night had thrown her.

Indeed, replied the kind Hoſteſs, you need not think of that in a Hurry; there is ſomething about you, that tells me you are more than what you would make us believe you are, and that has engaged me to you as

much as to my own Child. I ſhall not pry into what you are pleaſed to keep a Secret, but let me entreat you not to think of leaving me on a ſudden; but whether you like it or not, if you go by the Stage you muſt ſtay till this Day ſe'nnight; ſo that you muſt reſt contented where you are till then, and perhaps before that Time comes, we ſhall prevail on you to give us ſome more of your Company; at leaſt, nothing in my Power ſhall be wanting to make your Abode in this poor Hutt agreeable. My Daughter *Gillian* will be pure Company for you; ſhe has been Waiting-maid to the Squire's Lady that was, and knows how to behave herſelf to Gentlefolks; and though I ſay it that ſhould not ſay it, ſhe is a notable Girl, and will be proud to oblige you: I'll call her in, that you may ſee her and my Son *Dick*; though he is but a Farmer's Son, yet he is a rare Lad, and reſpected by all the Damſels in the Pariſh, and let me tell you, might have been married to Mrs. *Margery*, the Merchant's Daughter at *Bellhive*, who is worth a Power of Money; but the Rogue is nice; he would not have her, and all her Pelf, becauſe ſhe is not altogether ſo handſome, nor ſo well bred, forſooth! as he would have her.

The

The good Woman's Clack went ſo faſt, it was to no Purpoſe for Miſs *Summers* to attempt to make a Reply to the good-natured Bent of her Speech. She was obliged to be contented to let her call in her Son and Daughter. The Daughter accoſted her with ſome aukward Curtſies, and the young Cub gaped at the Sight of her as if he had ſeen a Viſion; he could not take his Eyes from her Face, nor utter a Word if it had been to ſave him from the Gallows. But the Mother's Tongue was not ſo hamſtring'd.—How now, *Dick!* what do you ſtare ſo for, Man? Did you never ſee a handſome Laſs before? Why don't you ſalute her as you ſee your Siſter did? Have you forgot all your Manners? If you were in Company with *Doll* in the Park, or *Sukey* at the Mill, you had been ſlabbering them all over by this Time; and yet now you ſtand like a Lout, without offering a civil Kiſs: I warrant you, young Miſtreſs won't bite you, you Clown you.—La! Mother, how you ſo ſhame a Body; I was never ſo ſurprized in my Life before. Odd ſo, with your Leave, pretty Damſel, I would kiſs thoſe pretty Lips, ſince my Mother ſays it is good Breeding.—He ſtepped forwards, laid his clumſey Paws about her Neck, and gave her two or three hearty

hearty Smacks, which ſhe was obliged to ſuffer.——La now, ſee you there, Mother! I can be as well-bred as the beſt of them, if kiſſing be all that's wanting. Odds-niggars! I ſhould never be tired of ſuch ſweet Sport: I hope, Mother, this pretty Laſs won't leave us this Twelvemonths? Efakins! I muſt have a Game at Romps round the Haycocks.——Oh, fye! Brother, returned *Gillian*, you muſt not let your Tongue run ſo before your Betters. Ye are ever ſaying too little or too much: Will you never learn to be polite, Man? I warrant, Miſtreſs and I find out Sport without your clumſey Help, and your Romps round the Haycocks, that's only fit for Milkmaids, ſuch as your Sweetheart *Sukey* at the Mill, and the other, you know where. —Ay, marry-come-up, Mrs. Pert! you think nobody's Clack has a Right to run but your own, and you would teach the Gentlewoman, for I'm ſure ſhe can be no leſs, to be as coy and ſkittiſh as you are, and never ſuffer any body to come near her, but your ſkipping Footmen, with their Monkeys Tails hanging to their Noddles; becauſe, forſooth! they can make a Scrape and a Bow, and call you Miſs, forſooth!——They were going on in this Kind of Jangle, when honeſt *Hodge* the Farmer came up to Miſs's Relief; aſked if ſhe had

had reſted better than ſhe had done at the Inn; and to entertain her, told her the Squire's Huntſman was hard by, breaking a young Hawk, which would be ſome Sport to her, if ſhe would ſtep out to the Cloſe to ſee it. She was glad of any Opportunity to be releaſed from the preſent Inundation of Impertinence, took *Gillian* by the Hand, and followed the Farmer where he led her. She was well enough entertained, while the Huntſman was training the Hawk to the Lure; but when he let fly a young Pidgeon, and ſhe ſaw the Hawk mount into the Air, and fall with its Pounces perpendicular upon the harmleſs Prey, which the Blow ſtruck dead to the Ground; ſhe ſhriek'd for the murdered Pidgeon, and could not reconcile to her tender Nature how Mankind ſhould take Pleaſure in ſuch wanton Barbarity; the very Thought of it brought Tears into her Eyes, which the Farmer perceiving, he carried her Home, where *Moll* had got Supper ready.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Containing Miſs Summers's *Adventures at* Hazlewood *Farm.*

AS Miſs conjectured, that it was beſt for her to lie concealed for ſome time, till any Search that was made for her by Lady *Bountiful* was over, ſhe was under the leſs Uneaſineſs at the neceſſary Stay ſhe was obliged to make at the Farm-Houſe; and the more ſo, as ſhe found herſelf every way reſpected, and treated with great Tenderneſs, by the honeſt Farmer and all his Family, who for ſome Time, left her no room to complain, unleſs from a little too much Talkativeneſs, which prevailed on the female Side of the Houſe, which ſhe put up with the beſt way ſhe could.

Nothing remarkable happened for the firſt two or three Days to diſturb her Tranquillity. The Morning after her Arrival, whether out of Fear of any Accident that might happen to her by keeping her Money, Watch and Jewels ſewed up in her Petticoat, or perhaps prompted to it by a little Spice of female Vanity, to ſhew that ſhe had

ſuch

ſuch Trinkets; ſhe unſewed them, and gave the Money and Jewels to the Farmer to lay up for her, and kept the Watch in her Chamber, to inform her how the Time paſſed, which lay pretty heavy upon her Hands, as ſhe had no Books to amuſe her, and found little Satisfaction in *Gillian*'s Company, who had all the pert prattling Air of a Country Waiting-maid, without one Grain of Senſe to make her Company tolerable.

The Sight of the Watch, Money, and other Toys, confirmed the Farmer and his Wife that there was ſome Myſtery in their fair Gueſt, and that her Pretence of going to *London* in Search of Service, was but a Blind to ſome other Secret; for her Manner, even to ſuch bad Judges as they were, and the Equipage of a Gold Watch, Chain, Etwee, *&c.* ill ſuited the Notion of a Waiting-Maid. Notwithſtanding their Partiality to their Daughter *Gillian*, they allowed Miſs *Summers*, who had aſſumed the feigned Name of *Sally Dickens*, to be quite another Woman, and fitter to be the Squire's Lady, than Waiting-Maid to any Perſon in the County. They had ſhewed her, upon the bare Strength of her Appearance, a great deal of Reſpect; but on ſeeing theſe Things

it

it was vaſtly heightened; and wiſe *Moll*, who thought herſelf a very notable Woman, told her Huſband *Hodge*, that this young Woman was certainly ſome Gentleman's Child, who had left her Friends on ſome Diſguſt; that they had beſt make up a Match between her and their Son *Dick*, ſince what ſhe had would go near to ſtock a little Farm; and perhaps her Friends, when reconciled, might make his Fortune.

The honeſt Farmer was accuſtomed to be governed by his Spouſe, and as his Underſtanding was not of the firſt Rate, he could foreſee no reaſonable Objection to her wiſe Scheme.

Dick was called, and informed of the Deſign, and *Gillian* aſſiſted at giving him Directions how he ſhould behave to gain his Miſtreſs's Heart. They laid their Plan, as they thought, with ſo much Wiſdom, that they looked upon the Match as concluded; and the Farmer called for a Mug of ſtout brown Beer, to drink to the Succeſs of it. *Dick* pledged his Father, cut a Caper as high as the Ceiling, and ſwore he hoped to be near about her Quarters in leſs than a Week.

They

They allowed her to reſt herſelf for a Day or two, before the hopeful Swain pretended to declare his Paſſion. He was in a mighty Quandary how to break the Matter to his fair Miſtreſs; and his Siſter gave him many Opportunities, by leaving them alone on frivolous Pretences; but poor *Richard* was always tongue-tied on theſe happy Occaſions, and could only gape his Meaning, which Miſs was far from explaining as he would have her. At laſt the Sight of a Rival got the better of his ruſtic Modeſty.

Mrs. *Gillian* had a neighbouring Farmer's Son, who made Love to her, whom ſhe received with ſome coquettiſh Airs, that had by this Time pretty nigh cooled the young Farmer's Flame, who was a ſprightly young Fellow, and had picked up a little Knowledge of the World, by being often with the young Squire of the Manor, and his Companions, at hunting Matches, in which the young Farmer was very uſeful, as he was extreamly lucky in finding a Hare, and ſtarting the Game.

Young *George*, after about a Week's Abſence from the coy *Gillian*, came to puſh the

the Matter home to her, being reſolved to ſtand no longer ſhilly-ſhally, but gain the important Prize, or make one grand Effort to tear her from his Memory.

Gillian, who thought by his Abſence ſhe had loſt him for Good, received him with a kinder Smile than ordinary, and introduced him to her fair Companion, the ſuppoſed *Sally Dickens*; but the Sight of that lovely Maid put all Thoughts of the homely *Gillian* out of the young Farmer's Head; he gazed himſelf in a Moment into a moſt deſperate Fit of Love, and had ſo little Prudence as to declare it before his former haughty Miſtreſs. As he had been told Miſs *Sally* was a young Woman going up to *London* for Service, (for they kept their other Suſpicions to themſelves) after he had made her a Leg, given her a hearty Smack after the Country Faſhion, he gazed upon her a little, and after a ſhort Pauſe, takes her by the Hand, —— Faith and Troth, Miſtreſs, you are a proper Damſel, and too good to go to that naughty Place *London* for Service; faith we muſt not part with you out of the County: But ſince Mrs. *Gillian* there has ſo often ſaid me Nay, if you'll put up with ſuch a Man as I am, for better for worſe, good Faith, Miſtreſs, I'll

ſet

ſet you down Miſtreſs of a good well-ſtock'd Farm, and that's better by far than *London* Service. What ſay you, Sweetheart, I love few Words, is it a Bargain?

Miſs *Summers* bluſhed to ſee herſelf uſed ſo familiarly by the Country Booby, and ſcarce knew how to reply to ſo odd a Declaration, as not knowing how affronting him might be taken by the honeſt Farmer, whom ſhe thought it a Sin, as well as imprudent, to diſoblige. However, *Gillian* enraged at the Affront offered to her Charms, and the open Rebellion of her quondam Slave, ſaved her the Trouble of a Reply.—Marry come up, my dirty Couſin! how dare you affront the Gentlewoman; you ſhould wipe your Mouth, you Clown you, when you ſpeak to ſuch as ſhe; ſhe is Meat for your Betters, and ſo pray, Mr. Loggerhead, march off to your dirty Dairymaid at *Hayhill*, and don't plague any Body here with your Impertinence.——Ha, Mrs. *Gillian!* Are you nettled? I hope I have not affronted this pretty Maid? I'm ſure I would not for the beſt Team I ever ſaw; but I would have you, Mrs. Minx, to know, that I can get better than you at any Time; and you and your ſkipkennel *Jack* the Squire's Footman, that met t'other Night down

down amongſt the Willows, by the ſame Token he gave you a Pair of Garters of his Mother's weaving, may pig together; take that, Miſtreſs, for your dirty Dairymaid; I warrant you think nobody knows who and who's together but yourſelf.—— *Gillian* threw a Ball of Worſted, ſhe had in her Hand, at his Head, and beſtowed on him a Volley of Country Epithets in ſuch a paſſionate loud Tone, that the Noiſe brought *Richard* and the Farmer; who being told by *Gillian* that *George* had the Impudence to make Love to Mrs. *Sally*, turned *George* out of Doors, and forbid him the Houſe.— You ſee, ſays *Moll* to her hopeful Son and Heir apparent, that other People are not meally-mouth'd as you are; and if you don't make Haſte, ſomebody elſe will ſnap her out of your Hands.——Odds-dickens, Mother, that's true! I'll go this Minute, and tell her a Piece of my Mind; that Dog *George* has put me into ſuch a Paſſion, I ſhall be afraid of nothing: Away then *Dick*, and God ſpeed the Plough.

The paſſionate Swain wiped his Mouth, ſtroaked ſtreight his Steinkirk, gartered up his Hoſe, and picked the Straws from his Shoes, and went up to Miſs *Sally*'s Room in a violent Hurry. He would have ſpoke the

the Moment he entered the Threſhold, but a Look from the fair Object of his Devotions ſtruck him once more dumb, and it is probable he would have continued as ſilent, as a Mute in the Grand Signior's Seraglio, if *Gillian*, who ſtill in a Paſſion, had not turned the Diſcourſe to his Purpoſe.——A very pretty Fellow you are indeed, Brother *Dick*, to let ſuch a paltry Fellow as *George* make Love to your Miſtreſs in your Father's Houſe; when you dare not, you are ſuch a Sheep, as open your Mouth to her.——Indeed, Siſter, I muſt own I have been a little baſhful or ſo; but I hope Miſtreſs won't think the worſe of me, though I don't ſpeak ſo faſt as that Scatterpate *George*, ſince I ſay it, though ſimple as I ſtand here, I can do more than he can ſay.—— Miſs *Summers* could not help ſtaring at the Puppy, which he looked on as a good Omen, and took Courage to ſquat himſelf down on the Chair by her, and looking up with a thoughtleſs Gape in her Face,—Tell me, ſweet Mrs. *Sally*, am not I another gueſs Man, than that Rattleſcull that was juſt now here? Am not I?——Miſs replied, half burſting into a Laugh, Indeed you are, Mr. *Richard*, quite another Man in my Opinion.—Look you there now, Siſter; efakins! ſhe is my own; we ſhall be pure happy! ſhan't us, Mrs. *Sally*.

Sally. When ſhall we ſend to the Clerk to proclaim the Banns; do let it be in a ſhort Time, for I'm in a woundy Hurry, till you and I get between a Pair of Sheets: Odd-bodikins! how my Mother and Father will leap for Joy. Why do'nt you ſpeak, Mrs. *Sally?* you be'nt dull?

Though the Oaf's Courtſhip would at any other Time have diverted her, yet at preſent her Mind, always upon the Watch for Fear of Danger, ſuggeſted to her the Unhappineſs of her Lot, that her unlucky Form ſhould beget Thoughts of her in Minds incapable of any Degree of Delicacy, and where the Obligations ſhe was under for her late Delivery, and the preſent Protection they afforded her, made it dangerous to treat the Inſult they ignorantly offered her, as it deſerved, and yet more difficult to behave ſo as not to give Encouragement to their Folly; ſince their Ignorance would explain Good-nature, and even common Civility, as a Compliance with their Whim. A thouſand diſmal Thoughts crouded into her Mind at once, and overwhelmed her with ſo much Sorrow, that ſhe could not hinder the Tears from burſting into her Eyes, which Mrs. *Gillian* obſerving, had by Chance the Diſcretion to take off the Puppy

her

her Brother from bating her, and whiſper'd him he had ſaid enough for the firſt Time, and to leave the Room, for that ſhe believed Mrs. *Sally* was not well.

Miſs *Summers* overheard the Whiſper, and improved the Hint to get rid of the Siſter that ſhe might be at Liberty to enjoy her own Reflections in private. She told *Gillian* when ſhe aſked her what was the Matter that ſhe ſeemed under ſo much Concern, that ſhe was taken ſuddenly very ill, and would lie down on the Bed to try to get ſome reſt. The other left her immediately, and went to the old People whom ſhe found with her Brother *Richard* in high Spirits, on the Account he had given them of the firſt Onſet. She told them Mrs. *Sally* was taken ill, and had deſired to be alone the Moment *Richard* left the Room. Ay, Ay, ſays *Moll*, it works, the young Woman is ſmitten, Lovers always deſire Solitude in the Beginning of the Diſeaſe. The Symptoms are good, Son *Dick*, puſh it home Boy, I warrant, in a Day or two, ſhe will deſire to be alone only with you. Wauns Mother, I hope ſo too; ſuppoſe I ſhould go up now and aſk her what was the Matter with her; I warrant ſhe only wanted to get rid of *Gillian* there, that ſhe and I might chat

freely: Ods heart, ſhe is no more ſick than I am, it is only a Pretence.

Mrs. *Gillian*, out of a Spirit of Contradiction to Brother *Dick*, oppoſed his going back to the Room, but the old Folks, unwilling to diſappoint young Hopeful, over-ruled her Opinion, and that young Creature had the Mortification to ſee the Looby enter the Room, where ſhe had juſt thrown herſelf upon the Bed giving looſe to her Tears and heart-piercing Sighs, and bemoaning to her ſelf her miſerable Fate, that ſeem'd to abandon her to a Succeſſion of Misfortunes. Her Back was towards the Door, when the Puppy entered, which he opened ſoftly, and perhaps he had been at the Bedſide ere ſhe had obſerved him, if the Noiſe of the Hobnails in his Shoes on the Floor had not given her the Alarm. She ſtarted up in a violent Hurry, and in the firſt Tranſport could not help aſking, with an angry Tone and Look, in the ſame Style as if ſhe had been at Lady *Bountiful*'s, How now? whence proceeds this Inſolence, that you dare ſteal upon my Privacy? Be gone and learn your Diſtance. Her Voice and Air ſtruck the Clown with ſuch a Tremor that he had ſcarce Limbs to carry him out. He made no Reply, but trotted back

to

to his Dame, and told her he believed the young Woman was mad; that ſhe got up off the Bed in ſuch a fiery Fume, and bid him be gone and keep his Diſtance with ſuch a haughty Air, that if ſhe had been a Ducheſs ſhe could do no more, and almoſt frighted him out of his Wits with her Looks: Ods Bodikins the Wench is as proud as the Devil ſince that Rogue *George* ſpoke of ſetting her down Miſtreſs of a Farm; but efakins, I would not have her give herſelf theſe ſkittiſh Airs to me, or may-hap ſhe may repent it. Out you great Looby you, replied *Gillian*, you make her repent it, will your Calf's Head beat her becauſe ſhe is angry at you for ſtealing to her Room when ſhe was lain down to reſt. I knew ſhe would take it ill, and what well-bred modeſt Woman would not, to ſee a Man come to her Bedſide, eſpecially ſuch a Cub as you are, that has no more Havance in you than a Colt. I believe *Gillian*, ſays the Mother, you are in the right, he ſhould not have gone up, but you muſt make his Peace when you are in Bed together. The young Woman is good-natured and will not keep anger long. Do, ſweet Siſter, ſpeak a good Word for me and you ſhall have a new Gown at the Wedding, Girl, if I ſhould ſell the young Colt Uncle gave me, to purchaſe it. Well then, I will,

Brother *Dick*, but it is upon this Condition only, that you are ruled by me, for the future, and not pretend to be meddling with Matters above your Underſtanding, and if I don't throw her into your Arms, ſay I am not *Gillian*.

Miſs *Summers* pretended, the Remainder of the Day to be out of Order, that ſhe might avoid the Company of the Houſe, who were now become odious to her, as ſhe judg'd that both young and old had formed the ſame fooliſh Plot upon her Perſon. She wiſhed for the Day on which the Stage was to paſs with greater Eagerneſs than a Priſoner for the Day of his Liberty, and reſolved, till that Time come, to avoid, if poſſible, coming to any Explanation with her new Lover, that ſhe might not chagrine the Family till ſhe was ready to leave it. But they put it out of her Power to keep that Reſolution; for *Gillian* teazed her Night and Day with her Brother's Paſſion, as ſhe called it, and would not take an evaſive Anſwer, but began to be abuſive when Miſs pretended to believe the whole was a Jeſt deſigned to divert her, and to treat it with Ridicule. I would have you to think, ſays *Gillian*, with a pert Toſs of the Head, that my Brother is not to be made a Jeſt of, and that he

he may get as good as you at any time, for all your Gold Watch and your Trinkum Trankums; marry come up, now where would have been all theſe fine Things you are ſo proud of and ſomething elſe, if my Father had not met you in the Lane? and yet you muſt, forſooth, turn up your Noſe and make your Game of his only Son; that is not grateful, let me tell you, Mrs. *Sally*. The Farmer had come in by Accident juſt as ſhe was in the Middle of this Speech; he ſaw Miſs's Boſom heave and pant with Vexation, and when ſhe mentioned Ingratitude, ſhe could not help burſting out into Tears with this Exclamation: Good God! into what a Labyrinth am I fallen! and turning to the honeſt Farmer, whoſe Eyes began to moiſten with Sympathy, tell me, dear Sir, what ſhall I do to expreſs my Gratitude for the good Offices you have done me? Teach me in what Manner it is in my Power to make you a Return for thoſe ſignal Benefits I have received by your Means, and I ſhall think myſelf happy, provided you do not mention a Match between me and your Son: By all the Ties of Charity and Humanity I conjure you not to teaze me, or ſuffer me to be teazed with a Subject that makes me wretched; for Oh Sir! you little know what Anguiſh I ſuffer.

May the Agonies of my Mind be a Stranger to this peaceful Habitation. To-morrow the Stage paſſes, I ſhall be gone from your Houſe, and if you deſire it only as a Token of Gratitude, take all the Money I gave you to keep; I will depend on Providence for my Support, and think myſelf happy that I can, in any Meaſure content you. She ſpoke this with the Tears flowing down her lovely Cheeks, and in ſuch a ſoft Tone that the Farmer muſt have been leſs than Man not to have been affected with it. Ceaſe, ſweet Miſtreſs to torment yourſelf, you owe me nothing but good Will, and that I ſee you have enough of. Indeed I thought once my Son and you would have made a Match on't, but as you take on ſo, and are ſo much againſt it, neither I, nor any belonging to me ſhall mention it. You ſhall have every Penny of your own Money again; God forbid I ſhould wrong ſuch ſweet Innocence; but Indeed you muſt not think of going with the Stage, but ſtay 'till the Middle of the Week when Squire *North*'s Coach is going up to town with only his Houſekeeper in it; ſhe will be glad of your Company, and that will be better than going in ſtrange Company; and I ſhall then be ſure you do not leave us in a Pet.

Tho'

Tho' Miſs dreaded a longer Stay in a Family where ſhe knew their Reſolves and Behaviour depended upon Whim and Caprice more than on their Underſtanding; yet ſhe could not with any Decency get off waiting for the Squire's Coach, whoſe Houſekeeper ſhe had ſeen at the Farmer's Houſe, as it was manifeſtly preferable to the Stage, and therefore aſſumed a Chearfulneſs to which her Heart was a Stranger, and told the Farmer that, as he deſired it, ſhe ſhould ſtay till then, but hoped that for that Evening, ſhe might be left alone as much as poſſible, as ſhe found herſelf out of Order, and that ſhe hoped Reſt would reſtore her Health.

The Farmer retired and took his Daughter along with him, who from that Moment, as ſhe ſaw all Hopes of a Match between her and her Booby Brother vaniſh'd conceived a ſtrong Antipathy againſt the unfortunate Fair; and ſhe was not long before ſhe had freſh Cauſe of Chagrine, for next Morning ſhe intercepted a Letter directed for Miſs *Summers* from young *George*, who finding he had no Acceſs to the Family, bribed a Boy belonging to the Farmer to deliver the fair Stranger a

Letter, wherein he makes an Apology in a pretty handſome Manner for the Abruptneſs of his laſt Declaration, makes freſh Offers of his Love, boaſts of his Wealth, and lets fall ſome ſlighting Expreſſion of haughty Mrs. *Gillian*, and in the End cautions her not to truſt too much to Farmer *Hodge*, who tho' an honeſt Man himſelf, yet was led by the Noſe by his Wife and ſome tricking Relations of hers who were no better than they ſhould be.

This Letter the Boy was lurking about for an Opportunity to deliver Miſs, when ſhe came out of her Chamber, and hearing the Door open, and fancying ſhe was coming, pull'd the Letter out of his Boſom and had it in his Hand, when Mrs. *Gillian* popp'd upon him, and caſt her Eyes upon it before he could hide it. She aſked what he had got he was ſhuffling in ſuch hurry into his Breaſt. The artleſs Boy made ſome frivolous Excuſe, which encreaſed her Curioſity, ſhe laid violent Hands upon the poor Lad, and took the Letter from him by Force.

The Noiſe of the Struggle between them brought Miſs *Summers* to the Chamber-Door to ſee what was the Matter, juſt as Mrs. *Gillian* was going to open the Letter, when the Boy cried out, why do you open it?

it? it is not for you it is for the Gentlewoman there. Miſs *Summers* ſeeing a Letter in her Hand: and hearing what the Boy ſaid, was amazed how a Letter could be directed to her, and reflecting of a ſudden that it might contain ſomething ſhe wiſhed to conceal, for ſhe had no Idea of *George*, haſtily ſnatch'd the Letter out of Mrs. *Gillian*'s Hand: How now Miſtreſs! how dare you preſume to open a Letter directed to me; has your Service at the Squire's taught you no better Manners? And looking on the Direction in a Hand ſhe had never ſeen, and addreſſed to Miſs *Sally Dickens*. Who gave you the Letter? Why, ſays the Boy it was young Farmer *George* gave it me this Morning, and deſired me to give it you privately, but Mrs. *Gillian* there forced it from me. Oh! is it from him, replied the pretended Miſs *Sally*, in a ſofter Tone, then Miſs excuſe me for being ſo haſty, you have a Right to read it; open it and ſee what is in it, if you pleaſe, for I have nothing to ſay to it, or the Author of it, and then returned to her Chamber, ſhutting the Door after her.

Mrs. *Gillian* took the Letter and read herſelf into the greateſt Rage imaginable. What, and am I the Scorn of that Bumpkin!

that dirty Dung-Cart *George*, and for the ſake of this chitty-faced Minx here, whom Nobody knows; but I'll be revenged of them both, I'll ſpoil her Cheeks for her, and teach that lubberly Clown to write of me and my Family with greater Reſpect. She was in twenty Minds to have gone that Minute to Miſs's Chamber and ferret her out with hard Thumps as ſhe term'd it, but ſeeing her Mother paſs by juſt in the nick, when ſhe had her Hand upon the Latch, ſhe ran to her with open Mouth, ſhowed her the amorous Epiſtle, and told her with what an haughty Air that proud Minx chid her only for pretending to open that dirty Letter, and after all, when ſhe had got it forſooth, ſhe would not look upon it, but threw it to me, with ſuch a diſdainful Toſs of her Head, endeavouring to mimic her, truly as if I had been but Dirt; I wonder, added ſhe, what my Father ſees in the unmannerly, long-ſhanked Doudy, that we muſt all be Slaves to her, and bear her Humours ſo long.

Moll the Farmer's Wife was highly incenſed againſt *George* for the unmannerly Reflection caſt on her and her Relations, and not a little piqued that he ſhould deſert her Child *Gillian* for the Stranger, whom ſhe did not think

think half ſo deſerving as her own Brat, for the Crow thinks her own Chick the whiteſt, but ſhe knew not how to be revenged on both; though her Diſpoſition for Miſchief was pretty much on Fire, yet her Invention was not fertile enough to form any Project that could reach one or other of them. However, when one or two Women are once bent upon Revenge, the Devil, or a third generally finds out the Means. Well, ſays *Moll*, ſay you Nothing of this Letter to your Brother, or your Father, but ſtep now down to Siſter *Cleck*'s and deſire her to come and ſpeak to me, without telling her what it is for, and I warrant ſhe and I contrive ſomething to plague that Rogue *George* and his new Sweetheart; let me alone to bring down Miſtreſs's Stomach, I warrant I make her glad to marry *Dick* out of a Shitten Clout as the Saying is, and may-hap mayn't after all let him take her. Away, good *Gillian*, there is ſomething more than nits in my Head at preſent, Siſter *Cleck* will help me to think of ſomething that may do Miſchief to Somebody.

Gillian was more than ordinary fond of the Errand, and though her Aunt *Cleck* was above a Mile off, and a pretty *Welch*

kind of a Road, yet ſhe and the old Succubus were returned in little more than an Hour. But as the Reader may gueſs by the two or three preceeding Pages, that I have been preparing Miſs *Summers* for ſome Diſaſter, ſo to give them an Opportunity to employ their Invention for ſome Moments in trying to gueſs what it is that is to befall her, I ſhall put an End to the Chapter; and as I foreſee the greateſt Conjurer of you all cannot gueſs at it, the Contents of the next will juſt give you a Hint ſufficient to whet your Appetite for the Chapter itſelf.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing the Women's malicious Contrivance to ruin and expoſe Miſs Summers.

GOODY *Cleck* had no ſooner arriv'd than *Moll*, *Gillian* and ſhe retired to the Barn as a Place of greater Secrecy for their helliſh Purpoſe; there Goody *Moll* opened the State of their Grievances againſt her innocent Gueſt, and informed her of every Circumſtance relating to her Huſband's

band's meeting her, reſcuing her from the Robbers, and exaggerated as an Act of the higheſt Impudence and Ingratitude her Refuſal to marry her hopeful Son *Richard*. Young *George* the Farmer had his Share of the Invective, and the Scandal he had uttered againſt her worthy Relations was remembered with a proper Emphaſis.

Old toothleſs Goody *Cleck* heard the Charge with the Calmneſs of a *Welch* Judge, but when it was finiſhed, ſhe railed againſt the Parties concerned with all the Malice of an incenſed Fury, 'Cuſs upon the Rogue 'does he call your Relations tricky. I 'would have the ill-begotten Villain to 'know we are as honeſt as any of his louſy 'Kindled. What though we ben't ſo rich, 'yet non of us was pillol'd, as his Aunt was, 'for ſtealing the Squire's Tulkeys. And 'what a Fool was your good Man to bling 'home that young Witch to his Houſe to 'bleed ſo much Miſchief and ſlight his own 'Child; but let me alone to be revenged of 'them both. Then ſcratching her trembling 'Noddle, Oh! I have it, you ſay ſhe has 'a Gold Watch, ſome Money, and a great 'many fine Nicknacks. I wallant ſhe ne'er 'came honeſtly by them. What do you 'know

know but ſhe may be ſome Lady's Woman who has robbed her Miſtreſs and run away with theſe fine Things. As I hope for Mercy, Siſter, replied Goody *Moll*, you have hit the Nail in the Head, as ſure as Eggs is Eggs ſhe is no better than a Thief. For now I think on't if ſhe had been good for aught, what had ſhe to do out of a Houſe at that Time of the Night my Huſband met with her? Ten to one but ſhe is one of the Gang that pretended to rob her, and that was a Contrivance between her and the Villains to get into our Houſe, that ſhe might let them in ſome Night to rob us. God preſerve us Siſter, what a wicked World is this! What a happy Thing it was that my Son *Dick* did not marry a Thief, and that we have not been killed in our Beds by that wicked Woman and her Crew! Now I ſee it as plain as the Noſe in your Face why ſhe was ſo ſhy to be ſeen by Strangers ever ſince ſhe came here, and why ſhe would not go to Church, it was for fear Somebody would have known and diſcovered her, and perhaps ſhe may be a Papiſt or a Jacobite for they are no Thieves I believe of our Profeſſion: Mercy on us, what a Vixen have I been foiſtering in my Boſom, and treating as if ſhe had been ſomewhat, the beſt Bed and the fineſt Sheets, and the beſt

Cheer

Cheer I had was not good enough for Madam, but I warrant I ſhall ſee her as naked as ſhe was born in the Houſe of Correction.

Oh la! Mother, ſays malicious *Gillian*, with a Grin and a Shrug, How I ſhall be pleaſed to ſee that dirty Damſel with her fine white Hands a beating of Hemp, and how that Loggerhead *George* will ſtare when his fine Gewgaw Miſtreſs is tried at the Seſſion for Velony! Oh dear me, it rejoices my Heart, I think we'll be even with him for his Flout at me; let us tell Veather that he may get the Conſtable to take her up and carry her before the Juſtice immediately, and I ſhall leap out of my Skin for Joy, to ſee how the proud Slut will ſtare when ſhe ſees ſhe is found out—Hold you there, cried Goody *Cleck*, and Mother *Moll*, both ſpeaking at the ſame time, we muſt not tell *Hodge* till the Thing is done, or ſhe'll work upon his ſilly good Nature ſo with her fine Words, for ſhe has ſuch a ſmooth Tongue of her own ſhe would make one believe Butter would not melt in her Mouth, tho' Cheeſe would not choak her. No, continued *Moll*, Farmer *Ralph* in the *Grange*, the Conſtable of our Hundred, I'll ſend *Wat* for him and give him a Leſſon to whip her up before my Sheep *Hodge* thinks aught of the Matter,

Matter, and I warrant if ſhe is once in his Clutches, all her Caterwauling will not work her out of them again, till his Worſhip has examined her.

The helliſh Plot being laid by the old Hags and the young Imp, *Wat* was immediately diſpatched for Mr. Conſtable *Ralph*, and in the mean Time the old Aunt *Cleck* was introduced to the unhappy Victim of their Revenge, and behaved to her with all the fawning Arts poſſible, as if no Miſchief had been deſigned: Good-lack-a-Day ſweet Miſtreſs, ſays the old Witch, how my Heart aked to hear the Condition you was in, ſweet Soul, when Brother *Hodge* ſaved you from the Ruffians; God's Bleſſing on his Heart for freeing you from their vile Clutches, I warrant he thanks God for it all the Days of his Life.

With this kind of Cant the old Jezabel entertained Miſs *Summers* every now and then, caſting a malicious ſide Leer, with her ſaucer Eyes, at ſiſter *Moll* and *Gillian*, and ſhooting out her treacherous Tongue as often as Miſs looked about, till *Wat* brought them Word, that the Farmer was come; they left her with malicious Ceremony,

ny, and went to give their Inſtrument his helliſh Inſtructions.

At the firſt Sight of old Goody *Cleck*, the unhappy Miſs *Summers* felt a Shock in her Mind, which ſhe could not account for. Its true the old Woman had no very amiable Appearance, yet that young Creature had too much good Senſe and good Nature to be ſhocked at the Effects of old Age and natural Infirmities; theſe would rather have created Reſpect, at leaſt Sympathy and Compaſſion, eſpecially to any Friend of the Farmer's, whom ſhe looked upon, next to Lady *Bountiful*, as the greateſt Benefactor ſhe had on Earth. Yet in ſpite of theſe natural and benevolent Prejudices in favour of the old Woman, her Soul ſtarted at the Sight of her, and when ſhe, *Moll* and *Gillian* left the Room, her Soul by a kind of preternatural Divination, ſhrunk as if conſcious of ſome impending Danger, a ſudden Tremour ſeized her all over, and her Noſe dropt ſome Drops of Blood. Heavens, cry'd the lovely Fair, what is the matter with me? Something heavy, ſomething unaccountable to my Reaſon oppreſſes my Spirits, and falling devoutly on her Knees by the Bed-ſide; 'Oh thou 'moſt high, in whom I put my truſt and

'ſole

'ſole Confidence, ſupport, guide and di-
'rect me, if it is thy Will to afflict me
'with new Trials, grant me thy Aid to
'bear them, and preſerve my Innocence,
'ſince it's thee alone that can defend me a-
'gainſt the Snares of this World, and the
'Blindneſs of my own Paſſion.'

She was yet on her Knees, and in the midſt of theſe pious Ejaculations, when the barbarous Crew, uſhered by their Agent the Conſtable and his Staff, rudely burſt open the Door. She turned about her Face, all bathed with Tears, and ſtarted from her Knees at ſo uncommon an Appearance. The Sight of a fine Woman in Tears, and in the higheſt Act of Devotion, ſtartled the Conſtable tho' one of the ruffeſt of the Tribe of Catchpoles; and out of Reſpect he had turned his Back, and was going out of the Room; when the vile *Cleck* puſhed him in again; Hey-Day, crys the old Beldam, what a Thief at her Prayers! are you religious in your Rogueries, or do you expect ſoon to be tucked up, that you are already preparing for a Halter! Come Mr. Conſtable *Ralph*, this Miſtreſs here, for all ſo demure as ſhe looks, is no better than a Thief, I charge her with Vellony,

Vellony, and desire you to carry her before his Worship.

As the first appearance of the Constable, his uncouth Aspect, his Staff, and the abrupt Intrusion of the whole Company, shocked Miss *Summers* so much, that if she had not taken hold of the Curtain of the Bed, she had certainly dropped down, but when she understood their Errand, and heard the Epithet of Thief applied to her, conscious of her Innocence, her Soul rouzed all its Faculties, shook off in an Instant every Symptom of Fear, and with a noble Pride, looked upon the whole Posse with Contempt. And with great Calmness replied, 'good Woman, your Age makes you doat, and I have no Answer to make to your Impertinence, but if this honest Man, who seems to be in some Authority, and I hope in his Senses, will tell me on what Account he breaks in thus rudely upon my Privacy, I shall be obliged to him.'

The Air and Majesty with which she delivered herself, so much beyond what the Constable expected, who by the bye, tho' he was a malicious Knave, yet was no Fool, created in him a Respect, and made him boggle a little at the Execution of his Office-

Office, believing that ſhe might be ſome Perſon of Credit, and that he ſhould be brought into Trouble about it. Look you now, replied the Clown, hur hope young Miſtreſs you won't blame me, and faith hur thought I ſhould ſee ſome run-away beggarly Thief, which I ſhould have taken Charge of, on Neighbour *Cleck*'s Word; but good Troth, hur do not know what to make of the Matter: Goody *Cleck*, turning to the old Witch, I dare not take Charge of young Miſtreſs without his Worſhip's Warrant, or that Farmer *Hodge* charge her with his own Mouth with Felony. Miſs *Summers* took freſh Courage, believing that the honeſt Farmer would not join in their Plot whatever it was, for yet ſhe had no Conception of what they would drive at; and Goody *Moll*, and *Cleck* looked as blank as you pleaſe for a Minute or two, gaping at one another as if they were bewitched. At laſt Goody *Moll* recovered her Surprize: What's the Matter Maſter Conſtable, that you won't take Charge of the young Harlotry, what you a Man and a Conſtable of the Hundred, and be daunted at the Sight of ſuch an impudent Baggage? Does not ſee Man, the ſtolen Goods about her, pointing to the Watch ſhe had by her Side? Look you there

there now Neighbour *Ralph*, do you think ſuch a Flirt as ſhe came honeſtly by ſuch a Thing; by my Faith and Troth its as good as Squire *Hopeſon*'s Lady's, ſhe had never a better by her Side, and you are ſuch an Aſs as not to lay hold on the Thief when the Villainy is plain before your Eyes. Take hold of her this Minute, I ſay, and carry her before his Worſhip, Mr. Juſtice *Rakeiſh*, of *Featherſtone-Hall*, I'll warrant he ferks the Truth out of her, for all her ſanctified Airs. Indeed Neighbour replied the Conſtable, I ſhall take no Charge of my young Miſtreſs, without you ſay ſhe ſtole the Watch from you, or that Farmer *Hodge*, my good Nieghbour, ſwears the Felony with her own Mouth, hur has more Wit, than to meddle with Gentlefolks at that Rate; had ſhe appeared a poor ragged Thief, I ſhould have made no Bones of the Matter, but hur knows his Worſhip, Juſtice *Rakiſh* always takes the Part of Gentlefolks, eſpecially handſome proper Damſels as this ſeems to be, and might chance to trounce me for my Pains if I did any Thing againſt the Law.

The Farmer and his hopeful Son, who neither knew one Tittle of what was tranſacting at Home, happened to be but at a ſmall

ſmall Diſtance, and within View of the Houſe, when they chanced to ſpy a Crowd of the Neighbours in the Village, which the Appearance of the Conſtable had brought about the Door. He and *Richard* immediately run up to ſee what was the Matter, and was met in the Entry by one of his Dairy Maids. Oh dear Maſter, what a Work is here? The fine Gentlewoman you brought Home with you laſt Week has ſtole ſomething, and my Miſtreſs and her Siſter Goody *Cleck* have ſent for the Conſtable, and are ſending her to *Featherſton-Hall*, to his Worſhip, Juſtice *Rakiſh*. My Heart bleeds for the poor young Creature; I am ſure and certain ſhe is innocent, for all Goody *Cleck* makes ſuch a woeful Doe about her being a Thief—— God's Fiſh, ſays *Richard*, my fine Miſtreſs a Thief? Tho' ſhe won't have me, yet I man't ſee her wronged neither. Make haſte Veather, and let us go up and ſee what is the Matter.

The Farmer was Thunder-ſtruck with the News, and without knowing what he did, went up to the Room where the helliſh Crew were aſſembled, without ſpeaking a Word. Oh, here he comes, ſays the Conſtable, now let us hear what Neighbour

Hodge

Hodge ſays to this Affair, hur likes to ſpeak to Men, and not to keep a Pribleprable with ſilly Women. Say Neighbour *Hodge*, has the Damſel been guilty of Vellony? Anſwer upon your corporal Oath, yea or no. Upon my Word, replied *Hodge*, not yet recovered out of his Surprize, and looking amazed like a Dog in a Dancing School, I know nothing at all of all this Rout; I have loſt nothing, and ſhe may be guilty of Vellony or any thing elſe for ought I know. Look ye there, Mr. Conſtable, replied the malicious *Cleck*, you ſee Brother *Hodge* ſays ſhe may be guilty of Vellony for aught he knows. I hope you'll take Charge of the young Harlotry now. Hold Sifter, returned the Farmer, a little come to his Wits again, tell me what the young Woman is charged with, for I tell you I have loſt nothing that I know of, and I believe her to be as honeſt as my own Wife, *Moll* there. Hold your impertinent Tongue, and not make Compariſons between me and a vile Thief. I tell you ſhe ſtole that Watch and the fine Gew-gaws hanging to it, and the Money, the twenty Guineas ſhe gave you to keep; I ſay ſhe did, let me hear your jolter Head contradict it, if you dare; don't you think I know what's what better than you; give her

in

in Charge this Minute to the Conſtable, or may-hap I may make the Houſe too hot for you elſe. Oh dear Veather do give your Charge, added the miſchievous *Gillian*, you little know what a Flirt ſhe is, and how much trouble you may come to for harbouring a Thief. Hold your ill-natured Clack, returned *Richard*, my Veather ſhall give no Charge, ſhe has ſtole nothing from you Mrs. Nimble-Chops, you are nettled becauſe young *George* has ſlighted you on her Account, and would be revenged would you? But I ſhall prevent that, this bout, Efakins. The Women all opened at once upon poor *Richard*, in a confuſed Noiſe of Railing and Scolding, which nobody could underſtand. Silence in the Court cries the Conſtable, you are all mad hur believes, what the Devil won't you let Neighbour *Hodge* ſpeak for himſelf; do you or do you not give me this Woman in Charge as a Vellon? Yes he does, cries the Women all at once: No, no, cries *Richard*, and the Farmer, cow'd by his Wife's fierce Looks, durſt not mutter a Word, tho' No was between his Teeth. Miſs *Summers* would have ſpoke to him, but the old Women ſet up ſuch a Hollow, ſhe was obliged to be ſilent and wait patiently the Reſult of this mad Aſſembly, whom

ſhe

ſhe ſaw bent upon Miſchief, without either Rhime or Reaſon. Why don't you ſpeak, you Dolt you? cries *Moll* to her Spouſe, muſt we ſtand here all Day waiting on your Chops opening? Give your Orders like a Man, or I'll ſplit your Dog's Head for you, at the ſame time ſhaking her Fiſt at him, which the good Man knew to be a certain Signal of an approaching Storm, he therefore wiſely choſe to ſhun it, tho' at the Expence of the Innocent. Well Neighbour *Ralph*, ſince my Wife *Moll* ſays the young Woman has ſtole theſe Things, it muſt be ſo; tho' upon my Soul I know nothing of the Matter, yet for Peace-Sake, pray carry the young Woman before the Juſtice, and let him do with her what he pleaſes.

Yes, now ſince a Man ſpeaks, I can ſafely do my Office, if it is wrong let you look to it, come Miſtreſs, you muſt along with me to his Worſhip, Juſtice *Rakiſh*, at *Featherſtone-Hall*, his Worſhip will diſpatch you in a twinkling of an Eye, he makes the beſt diſpatch at a Mittimus of any Juſtice in *England*.

To Mr. Juſtice *Rakiſh*, replied Miſs *Summers* ſtartled, pray is he not a young

Gentleman, pretty Tall, and of a black Complexion? Yes he is, replied the Conſtable, oh I find you are no Novice, I fancy you muſt be an old Offender, and has been thro' his Worſhip's Hands before now, if ſo, its time to be jogging; I have been afraid of my own Shadow, and might have been returned before now and at my Work, but that I thought I had to do with ſomebody better than ordinary; come, why don't you ſtir your Limbs, I ſhall get a Cart elſe. Hold, for Heaven's Sake, cry'd the afflicted Fair, be not in ſuch haſte to do Miſchief, and what you may dearly repent. Cannot you oblige me, ſince I muſt go before a Juſtice for a Crime I am innocent of, to carry me before ſome other, I have a particular Reaſon to refuſe to go there; but God, who will protect my Innocence againſt the Malice of theſe Women, knows it is not Guilt; Oh! Mr. Conſtable, if you have the leaſt Spark of good Nature in you, carry me any where elſe, but not there. No, no, cry'd the female Hell-hounds, don't mind her Neighbour *Ralph*, carry her to his Worſhip Squire *Rakiſh*, and none elſe; don't be bamboozled with her Crockadile Tears, you ſee her proud Stomach is come down, ſhe knows his Worſhip you ſee if ſhe were innocent ſhe would go where ſhe is known

to

to chuſe, but ſhe thinks to eſcape, if we carry her before Squire *Softhead*, becauſe ſhe fancies ſhe can pelaver him over with a fine Tale of a Cock and a Bull, which I warrant ſhe has at her Tongue's End: I am of your Mind Neighbour, replied the Conſtable, and to his Worſhip *Rakiſh* ſhe ſhall go, and no where elſe.

To the unhappy Miſs *Summers* it would at firſt ſeem indifferent before whom ſhe was carried, ſince ſhe knew the worſt that could happen, beſides being expoſed, was to own who ſhe was, and appeal to Lady *Bountiful* for a Character: But that ſhe dreaded above all things, as it would deſtroy her whole Scheme. And therefore ſo ſoon as ſhe heard Juſtice *Rakiſh* mentioned, ſhe recollected, that ſhe had ſeen him often, and had been entertained by him with ſome very impertinent country Gallantries, therefore, if ſhe went before him ſhe was ſure to be diſcovered, and her Plan ruined that Way; and beſides expoſed to the Diſcretion of a young Fellow of the moſt abandoned libertine Principles, and who was remarkable for his licentious Behaviour to Women of all Ranks; ſo that if ſhe had come before him in this Equipage ſhe had every thing to fear; whereas if ſhe was

carried before a Stranger, ſhe had a Chance, even if ſhe diſcovered herſelf, to prevail on a Man of any ſhare of good Nature and Humanity to keep her Secret. It was this Thought which made her appear ſo anxious with the Conſtable to avoid Juſtice *Rakiſh*; but the more averſe ſhe ſeemed, the more they were determined to purſue that Step. She begg'd, pray'd, kneel'd and entreated the Brute with Language and Action, that would have melted a Stone; but his own rugged Nature, caſe-hardened by the Malice of the female Fiends, rendered him obdurate to all her Entreaties. At laſt, when Words, Prayers nor Tears would not prevail.—What is it cruel People you aim at, is it my Life? Kill me, pray, at once, but don't enhance my Miſery by expoſing me in this Manner.—Is it what I have ye covet, which that miſ-led Man ſaved from leſs ſavage Robbers? Oh take it all for God's Sake; leave me but this, unhooking from the Watch a miniature Picture in Enamel, of Lady *Bountiful* and Sir *Thomas* when a Boy of ten Year's Old; and take all the Reſt, I'll give it you freely and bleſs you, pray for you while I live, if you but let me go; here take the Trifles and divide them amongſt you, I can but beg my Way to ſome more hoſpitable Region.

The

The Conſtable tho' deaf as an Adder to Tears, Prayers and Entreaties of Innocence and mourning Beauty, yet in this laſt Speech found ſomething that moved his ſavage Paſſion, the Sight of the gold Watch thrown on the Table, and the Thoughts of the Spoil in the Farmer's Hands, with the Words, (divide them amongſt you) touched his brutal Heart. Nay, what is ſtill more wonderful, the Thoughts of Intereſt even wrought upon the malicious *Cleck*, and the revengeful and miſchievous *Gillian*; in a Moment this laſt caſt her greedy Looks upon the Watch, and fancied it at her Side, and toſſed her haughty Head as if already graced with that Ornament. In ſhort this laſt Speech of the unhappy Sufferer, ſoftened the Hearts and Countenances of the whole rugged Aſſembly. The Farmer leaped for Joy, but it was from a different Motive from all the Reſt. He hoped to be poſſeſſed of the Goods, and to get the young Woman out of the Clutches of the Women, and then to have reſtored them to her; for tho' this Peaſant had the Honour, as well as many *Britiſh* Huſbands of great Renown, to be under Petticoat-Government, yet he was naturally honeſt and generous, when not under the Influence of

termagant *Moll*, who herſelf would not have been quite ſo bad, if ſhe had not been hag-rid by her Siſter, who was a true Servant to the old Gentleman in black.

The Conſtable on hearing and pauſing a little on this Offer of the Priſoner, ſoftened his magiſterial Countenance, and told Miſs he would truſt her by herſelf for a few Minutes, till he conſulted with his Neighbours what might be done, but would make bold to carry with him the Watch. He took it up without waiting her Reply, he and his Poſſy went out, and he locked the Door after him.

Miſs, whoſe Spirits, it is eaſy to be imagined, was in the utmoſt Agitation during the Wrangle in her Preſence, remained after they left the Room in a kind of fearful Suſpence; ſhe had ſeen ſuch frequent and unexpected Changes in her State, that ſhe durſt not flatter herſelf with the ſmall Proſpect ſhe had at Preſent of being delivered, on very hard Terms, from the Hands of theſe ravenous Vultures. She was afraid of every thing, while her Fate was in ſuſpence, and had nothing to ſupport her from ſinking under that Weight of Woe which oppreſſed her, but that conſtant Dependance on the Aſſiſtance of divine Providence, whoſe Good-

Goodneſs ſhe had ſo often experienced. She took out of her Boſom, where ſhe had placed it, when ſhe unhooked it from her Watch, the miniature Picture of Lady *Bountiful*, and with a Heart ready to burſt, How little does the dear Original of this Picture think to what Misfortunes I am expoſed, even for the Sake of theſe Trifles her Bounty furniſhed me with; how happy was I when under that dear Woman's Protection, and how happy might I have been ſtill, had not this dear Youth's ill-directed Paſſion ſoured all my Peace. Yet I ſuffer this, and am ready to ſuffer much more to preſerve the Peace of that noble Family, and to convince my Benefactreſs, that nothing this Side of Time is ſo dear to me as her quiet. When bereft of all, I ſhall think myſelf happy, nay rich in Poſſeſſion of this Picture: Sure I am, the Barbarians will not grudge me this; but if they ſhould, the Originals are too deeply engraven in my Heart, that I ſhould need this to put me in mind of them.

While Miſs was in this melancholy Soliloquy, ſhivering between Hope and Fear, her Perſecutors were got together by the Ears, and at high Words about the Diviſion of the Spoil. The Conſtable when he came out of the Room, harrangued his Audience,

and adviſed them by all Means, to accept of the Priſoner's Offer, ſince if they carried her before a Magiſtrate, they had no Right to any thing ſhe had, and that if ſhe had actually ſtole them, ſomebody elſe would claim them and give them but a Trifle for their Pains. It required no great Rhetoric to perſuade any of them to fall in with his Advice, and the Farmer taking the Watch out of the Conſtable's Hands.—Well Neighbour *Ralph*, we thank you for the Trouble you have been at, you may now leave the young Woman with me, I ſhall ſend her away immediately, and you may give out that we were all miſtaken, and that ſhe proves a very honeſt Perſon; and here Neighbour, that you may not have all this Trouble for nothing, there is a Guinea for you; its ſoon earned Neighbour, you would not have made ſo much by twenty Shillings by ſtaying at home. It may be not Farmer *Hodge*, replied the Conſtable, in a very ſurly Tone, but do you think to put me off with a louſey Guinea, and to keep all to yourſelf; no, no, hur knows a Trick worth two of that; you but joke Neighbour *Hodge*, you muſt not bam me ſo neither, let us have a fair Diviſion, and much good may your Share do you. A fair Diviſion *Ralph*, cries *Moll*, in a bloody Paſſion,

Paſſion, What Right have you to any thing but a Groat for ſerving a Warrant? I think *Hodge* there has been too free of his Money when he offered you a whole Guinea; Diviſion quoth a, let me ſee if he dares give you a Souce more; take that, or ye ſhall have ne'er a Farthing; what do you take us for Ideots to be at all this Pains with the young Woman to give half to you, *Ralph*. No, no, you muſt put none of your ſharping Tricks upon us, come take your Guinea and march off with your long Staff, we have no more to do with you here. Sharping Tricks, replied the enraged Officer of Peace, give us none of your Names, Neighbour *Moll*, you know I have had the handling of you before now for your ſcolding Tongue, and may hap may have it again; Goody, remember the Stocks in the Church-Yard, they are pure ſtrong, and I keep the Key. Goody *Cleck*, goody *Moll*, and Termagant *Gillian*, all opened at once, like a Pack of dee-mouth'd Hounds againſt the Conſtable, and were ready to pull his Eyes out; but he was Mettle enough for them all, and after returning them as many foul Names as they gave, told them Well then, ſince I'm not to have my Share, d——mn my blood if you touch a Shilling that belongs to her. You, Farmer *Ralph*,

gave the young Woman in charge to me as a Felon, I'll carry her before his Worſhip, hinder it who dares, and let him decide who has a Right to theſe Things, if I not my Cut, you ſhall not; I charge you all in the King's Name, to aſſiſt me to carry the Priſoner to his Worſhip's, come Farmer, you muſt come along to make good your Charge. They would have been willing now to have compounded a little, but the Conſtable was in ſuch a *Welch* Paſſion that he was even deaf to his own Intereſt, ran up to the Chamber, and went rudely up to the unhappy Miſs *Summers*, and ſeizing her by the Arm, come, come along Miſtreſs before his Worſhip Juſtice *Rakiſh*, he muſt determine this Matter, come along I ſay, I can't dilly dally here all the Day.

The unfortunate Sufferer fell on her Knees, preſſed the Barbarians Hands, and begged of him in Terms that would have tamed an *African* Monſter not to carry her before that Gentleman, but he remained obſtinate, and had dragged her by downright Force almoſt to the Door of the Chamber, when young *George*, ſo often mentioned before, bounced into the Room, and ſeizing the Conſtable by the Collar, unhand the Gentlewoman you Brute you,

what

what Right have you to uſe her thus? Tell me this Inſtant, or I'll ſqueeze your Soul out. The Conſtable let go his Hold of Miſs, and in a dreadful Panick, for his Courage lay in his Office, not in his Heart, begged of *George* to be patient and he would tell him. *George* let go his Collar, and turning to Miſs with a Politeneſs not common to Men of his Rank, handed her to a Chair, compoſe yourſelf, Madam, I'll ſtand your Friend or loſe my Life in the Attempt. Well, *Ralph*, what have you to ſay againſt this Gentlewoman? I have nothing, replied the Conſtable, but only Neighbour *Hodge* gave her me in Charge as a Felon, and I was carrying her before Mr. Juſtice *Rakiſh*, and the young Woman would rather go before any body elſe, that's all. I mun do my Duty, mayn't I Mr. *George?* I know you muſt, replied *George*, but I think the Sight of this much wrong'd young Creature ſhould have hindered you from uſing her brutiſhly as you were doing when I came in, I know the Spite Neighbour *Hodge* and his Family have at her, I have heard it all but this Minute, (he had been acquainted with the whole Proceedings ſince the Arrival of the Conſtable by the Boy I ſpoke of who delivered his Letter) and ſomebody ſhall ſmoak for it unleſs they

give up what they have of hers and let her freely quit the Houſe this Minute. No, that ſhe ſhall not, cried the enraged Women, for all your huffing. How can you ſuffer ſuch a Raſcal to affront you in your own Houſe, Huſband? turn him out by the Ears this Minute, if you are a Man. The Farmer in his Heart approved *George*'s Proceeding, and beſides was not over and above courageous at any Time and therefore could not be wrought upon ſo much as to pretend to be angry, notwithſtanding all the Women could ſay to provoke him; but *Richard*, who looked upon him as a Rival, was eaſier moved, and began to mutter ſomewhat between his Teeth, which young *George* crammed down his Throat with a ſound Douce in the Chops with his Double Fiſt, which ſilenced him, but ſet the Women a ſqualling and ſcolding more than ever. *George* turning to Miſs, who ſate all this Time in a Kind of Reverie, unable to form any Judgment of what was like to become of her. Come Madam, I ſee there is no Way of ſerving you but by appealing to a Magiſtrate, who will do juſtice to your Innocence; we ſhall go before Squire *Worthy*, he is a grave Man and a Man of Honour, I warrant you he trounces the Rogues, let me ſee the Conſta-

ble

ble refuſe to go there if he dares; and that we may not want Company, I charge you, *Ralph*, with Farmer *Hodge* and theſe Women, for a Deſign to rob and defraud this Gentlewoman of Goods and Money to a great Value.

Miſs *Summers*, at the firſt Part of his Speech, which related to her going before Juſtice *Worthy*, was overjoyed, as ſhe began to conceive by his Character ſome rational Hope of being relieved, but when he mentioned charging the Farmer and his Family, ſhe ſtarted back and cried, God forbid, Sir, that you ſhould put them to any Trouble; if they have meant me harm lately I forgive them, but as the Farmer ſaved me from the Ruffians, I ſhall never return that Benefit with ſo much Ingratitude as to do him any Injury; therefore, let me conjure you, Sir, to let the Farmer go or ſtay, juſt as he pleaſes. You are ſtrangely generous, replied *George*, but you muſt excuſe me if I cannot comply ſo far at preſent, you may ſay what you will when you come before the Juſtice, and then may proſecute him or not, but I think it neceſſary for your Safety that we act as we do at preſent. Miſs made ſome further Remonſtrances in the Farmer's Behalf; but *George*, who

who had a Spice of the Stubborn, as well as the Revengeful in his Temper, was obſtinate, and ſtuck to his Charge, ſo that the whole Family attended Miſs, as Priſoners, to Mr. *Worthy*'s Houſe, which was about a ſhort Mile from the Farmer's. But his Worſhip's Butler had juſt ſtruck three great Knocks againſt the Pantry Door when the Company entered, and they were obliged to wait till after Dinner before they could have Audience, and as the Word Dinner puts me in Mind that my Reader and I may be diſpoſed for a Slice of ſomething we cannot get at his Worſhip's, I ſhall put an End to the Chapter that we may be furniſh'd elſewhere.

CHAP. IX.

Containing Miſs Summers's *Behaviour before the Juſtice, and her Releaſe from this Perſecution.*

MISS *Summers*, her Proſecutors and Protector were uſhered into a Parlour to wait 'till the Juſtice had finiſhed Dinner, which, as I obſerved was juſt ſerved up as they entered.

The Porter who let them in, notwithſtanding the Grief which was viſible in her Coun-

Countenance, was amazed to ſee one of her Appearance come there as charged with Felony. He reported her Beauty, *&c.* to the reſt of the Servants, who all of them one by one came into the Room to have a Peep at her, and went away highly prejudiced in her Favour. The News of ſo extraordinary a Priſoner was carried in to his Worſhip and his Lady, and ſo favourable a Report made of her Appearance that the Juſtice and all his Family made a very haſty Meal, that they might gratify their Curioſity that was ſo highly raiſed by the Account of the Servants who waited at Table; even the Chaplain diſpenſed with two Glaſſes and ſhortened his Grace, that with the reſt he might have a View of the lovely Priſoner.

As Mr. *Worthy* was told young Farmer *George* came along with her, he call'd him in when the Cloth was taken away, to learn ſomething of the Matter beforehand. That young Man gave a very favourable Account of the fair Priſoner, related the Manner the Farmer had met with her, their Deſign of forcing her to marry their Son *Dick*, and this Plot about the Conſtable to have cheated her of all ſhe had, if they could have agreed about the Diviſion of their Booty.

This

This Account which was given of the Priſoner by young *George*, in the Preſence of Mrs. *Worthy*, very much attached that good-natured Lady to Miſs *Summers*'s Intereſt, and made the Juſtice himſelf, who was a Man of ſtrict Probity and great Humanity, impatient to do her all the Juſtice in his Power, and violently bent on puuiſhing the baſe Attempt of the Farmer and the Conſtable, as their Malice deſerv'd.

The Parties were called in, and if the Juſtice and his Family, who all ſtaid to hear the Iſſue of ſo uncommon a Tryal, were prepoſſeſſed in the Favour of the unfortunate Fair, her Appearance and noble but modeſt Deportment, even before ſhe uttered a Word in her own Defence begat in them all, not only Sympathy and Compaſſion, which Savages would have afforded to ſo much Beauty in Diſtreſs, but the warmeſt Friendſhip and Affection.

The Conſtable had hold of her Hand when ſhe entered the Room, but ſhe had no ſooner dropped a Courteſy with one of thoſe expreſſive Looks, which beſpeak a Perſon truly well bred, than Mrs. *Worthy* roſe from her Seat, took her by the Hand and placed her in a Chair next herſelf, ſaying at the ſame time,

time, Madam I am heartily ſorry to ſee a Perſon of your Mien and Aſpect on ſo odd an Occaſion; but take Courage, Madam, that Innocence which I can read in your Face muſt always find Friends, except amongſt Barbarians. I'm ſure Mr. *Worthy* will do you juſtice, and you need be under no manner of Apprehenſion. I'm glad, Madam, replied the lovely Priſoner, that Fortune in the loweſt Ebb of my Diſtreſs has placed me in ſuch Hands, where I doubt not but I ſhall meet with Humanity and Compaſſion; I truſt in Providence, who knows my Innocence, that nothing will appear againſt me, to oblige you, Madam, to repent the good Nature with which you are pleaſed to treat the moſt unfortunate of her Sex.

The Goodys *Cleck* and *Moll*, the ſurly *Gillian*, the Farmer and the Conſtable looked extremely ſheepiſh when they heard and ſaw the Reſpect with which Mrs. *Worthy* treated the unhappy Priſoner, and young *George* was ready to leap out of his Skin for Joy, his Eyes ſparkled with malicious Pleaſure to ſee the Confuſion of the Farmer and his Family, and he could not help aſking Mrs. *Gillian*, in a jeering Whiſper, who ſtood as mute as a Fiſh to hear him, Pray when ſhall I have the Pleaſure of ſeeing you

with

with the Gold Watch by your Side? I ſuppoſe that muſt fall to your Share by and by.

The Juſtice, who had all this while his Eyes intent upon Miſs, and amazed at the Barbarity of the villainous Crew, that could find in their Hearts to commit ſo much Violence on a Perſon of her innocent Appearance, would willingly have given Vent to the Indignation with which the Sight of her Proſecutors filled him, and have treated them, without any other Evidence, as the moſt abandoned Criminals; but recollecting his Office as a Magiſtrate, he ſmooth'd the Frown that had already gathered on his Brow, and with as much Calmneſs as he could affect, aſked the Conſtable what he had to lay to the Charge of this young Gentlewoman.

The Manner in which the Juſtice ſpoke, gave the Conſtable and his Party ſome Courage, for they had been accuſtomed by the Juſtices before whom they ordinarily went, to gather the Succeſs of their Cauſe by the Degree of Warmth in the Voice, and the Number of Wrinkles in the Juſtice's Brow, and fancied that as Mr. *Worthy* did not ſalute them with Rogue and Raſcal, they had ſome Chance of carrying their Point, not-

notwithſtanding the Favour ſhewn the Priſoner by the female Side of the Magiſtrate.

If it pleaſe your Worſhip, replied the Conſtable, Farmer *Hodge* here tells me he met with this young Woman about two Hours turned of Midnight, in a Lane a little more than five Miles from *Cowan Gathbury* tied a Tree by ſome Ruffians, who as ſhe told him, had robbed her and fallen out amongſt themſelves about lying with her; the Farmer unbound her and returned her Things which the Rogues had left behind them in their Hurry to get off when he and his Man came up; and that he, believing her to be an honeſt Perſon in Diſtreſs, carried her home with him to his own Houſe till ſhe was recovered from the Fright; but on ſeeing ſhe had a Gold Watch, ſome Money, and a great many Things that belongs only to Gentlefolks, and that ſhe ſaid ſhe was only a young Woman going to Service for *London*, made him ſuſpect that ſhe was ſome runaway Lady's Woman, and ſtole theſe Things from her Miſtreſs, and therefore he charged her with Felony, and ordered me to carry her before Juſtice *Rakiſh*; but the young Woman it ſeems knows his Worſhip, and was not willing to go there, which looks

looks very ſuſpicious, and young *George*, who I believe is her Sweetheart, forced me to bring her before your Worſhip. Have you, reſumed the Juſtice, Farmer *Hodge* any thing to ſay more than what the Conſtable has told? and what Reaſon have you to ſuſpect that the Things you ſpeak of are ſtolen? Indeed, reply'd the Farmer, I don't know whether they are or not, but my Wife *Moll* there and her Siſter *Cleck* ſays they are, and made me, againſt my Will, charge the young Woman, who I believe is as innocent as the Child unborn; but your Worſhip knows a Man muſt do a great deal for Peace, ſo it be to humour one's own Wife. *Moll* gave him a Look that ſpoiled his Speech, and added herſelf, Indeed pleaſe your Worſhip, I am ſure ſhe is no better than ſhe ſhould be, or ſhe had not been out of a Chriſtian Houſe at the Time of Night *Hodge* met her, and then ſhe has been ever ſince ſo fearful of being ſeen by any body; if but a Horſe went paſt the Door, or the Dog barked, ever ſince ſhe came to us, ſhe would be in ſuch a fearful Fright, grow pale, and tremble, ſo as if ſhe were going to be hanged; I am ſure honeſt Folks are not ſo fearful. Ay, added malicious *Cleck*, and when we ſpoke of carrying her before Juſtice *Rakiſh*, whom ſhe knows, (I warrant

warrant for no Good an't pleaſe your Worſhip) ſhe was in ſuch a Fright, cried and ſobbed as if ſhe had been ready to burſt, and begged and prayed not to go, and when the Conſtable there was reſolute, ſhe offered all ſhe had, except a little Picture ſhe has got in her Boſom there, to get free, but that confirmed our Suſpicion, and made us reject the Offer. Yes, you old —— Witch, young *George* would have ſaid, but that he catched himſelf in time, you rejected it becauſe the Conſtable there would go halves with you in the Booty; if you could have agreed, we ſhould not have had the Trouble to come here, but you and your Huſband would have got what you ſaved from the Highwaymen.

The Juſtice ſaw well enough that Malice and Avarice were the chief Motives of the Proſecutors, yet he thought there ſeemed a Myſtery at the Bottom of the whole which he could not comprehend, and that there were ſo much Grounds for their ill-natur'd Suſpicion as left him no Room as a Magiſtrate to diſmiſs the Priſoner without giving a very good Account of herſelf; tho' if he had followed the Dictates of his Heart as a private Perſon, he would have acquitted her without any further Enquiry. He turned

turned about to her, and with as much Affability in his Countenance as poſſible that he might not intimidate her, told her, Madam, you hear the Charge and the Grounds of their Suſpicion, I'm perſuaded you can ſatisfy us that the Goods in Queſtion are your own, by relating who you are, and by what Accident you come to be alone at ſuch a Time of Night, and what could induce you rather to part with Things of ſuch Value than go before a Magiſtrate, who as they ſay is known to you, who would at once have ſilenced this Clamour and ſaved you from the Malice of theſe ignorant People. I'm inclinable to believe you innocent, but my Duty as a Magiſtrate obliges me to require ſome Explanation that may juſtify my diſmiſſing a Charge of this Nature.

Miſs was pleaſed with the delicate Manner in which the Juſtice hinted his Suſpicions, but however ſoftly they were intended, her Pride could not brook being thought a Thief, eſpecially by People of Rank, whoſe Opinion of her ſhe valued; the Thoughts of it oppreſſed her Spirits, and ſhe could not help burſting into Tears. Good God! when ſhall Fortune ceaſe to perſecute me? how hard is it that Actions founded on the ſtricteſt Rules of Virtue, and enforced

enforced by dire Neceſſity ſhould alone impeach my Innocence, and charge me with a Crime unknown to any of my Blood, and which my Soul abhors.

Her Tears would not let her proceed, and ſhe was ready to faint with the Agony ſhe was in of being obliged to diſcover herſelf, eſpecially before ſo many, and ſuch low Company. Mr. *Worthy* ſaw her Embarraſſment which his good Nature and the Prepoſſeſſion he had conceived in her Favour, made him interpret to her Advantage; he was melted into the greateſt Compaſſion, and wiſhed that he had not been enforced to put her to ſo much Pain; and the amiable Mrs. *Worthy* was ſo moved, that ſhe inſenſibly accompanied her Tears without knowing the Motives the lovely Mourner had for being ſo much overwhelmed with Sorrow; however ſhe had happily the Preſence of Mind to relieve her from a great Part of the Embarraſſment. I gueſs, ſaid ſhe, Mr. *Worthy*, that there is ſome Myſtery in the Caſe of this unhappy young Creature, her Sorrow does not ſeem the Effect of conſcious Guilt, but that of Innocence oppreſſed, and a Mind labouring with ſome Secret it may not be proper to diſcover before ſuch Company; let me intreat you

you to order thoſe People to withdraw, and perhaps you may be ſatisfied that their baſe Suſpicions are ill grounded.

Mr. *Worthy* improved the Hint, and ordered every body out of the Room, except his Lady, whoſe Preſence he thought would encourage the fair Priſoner to open her Caſe with greater Freedom; but before the Conſtable and Farmer went out, he ordered them to leave the Things they had taken from Miſs, and on looking at the Watch, he aſked where the Picture was they ſpoke of? The young Gentlewoman has it in her Boſom, ſays *Hodge* ſhe can give it your Honour, if there is not ſome Name to it that may inform you of the right Owner. Miſs pulled it out, and gave it Mr. *Worthy*, with a Look of Contempt at the malicious Conſtable, who immediately left the Room.

When they were all gone, Mr. *Worthy* addreſſed himſelf to Miſs, who had reſumed a greater Compoſure in her Looks, and Behaviour. Your Appearance, Madam, has prepoſſeſſed me with the Belief that the whole of this Affair is the Height of Malice and Villainy. I aſſure you I am willing to ſerve you all in my Power, and beg you may enable me to do it by letting me into

ſo

ſo much of your Affair as may ſilence the Clamour. You may depend upon it no Uſe ſhall be made of what you impart, but to ſerve yourſelf, and that if it requires it, an inviolable Secrecy ſhall be obſerved. Miſs was about to reply to this obliging Behaviour of the worthy Magiſtrate, when Mrs. *Worthy* who had been, while he was ſpeaking, examining the Picture with great Attention, in a kind of Tranſport, ſaid, I gueſs, Mr. *Worthy*, I have diſcovered the Secret; I knew I was right, my Mind was fully aſſured at firſt Sight, that this young Lady deſerved the higheſt Eſteem. Miſs bluſh'd at the Compliment, as ſhe thought that her Secret was known. Don't be concerned, Madam, that we have found out what you were willing to conceal, I think it almoſt a happy Accident, that has brought me to the Acqaintance of a young Lady I have heard ſo much admired and commended by the good Lady *Bountiful*, whoſe Picture I know this to be, and from thence judge you are the Miſs *Summers* for whom that worthy Family has been for this Week paſt in ſo much Concern. I am ſure it will be joyful News to that good Lady that you are found. Oh! for Heaven's Sake, Madam, replied Miſs *Summers*, ſince I do not deny but that you have hit upon my

Story, yet I beſeech you, by all the Ties of Humanity, to conceal your Knowledge of me from that Family; my Peace, my Happineſs, my Reputation, and what is dearer to me than all theſe put together, the Quiet of that dear Lady my moſt generous Preſerver depends on my concealing myſelf, which was the only Reaſon that has brought me into ſo many Misfortunes, and to avoid ſuch a Diſcovery I refus'd going before Mr. *Rakeiſh* who muſt have known me at firſt Sight, and I knew him too well either to give him ſuch Advantage over me, or truſt him with a Secret of ſuch Importance, which I was ſure he would divulge. But I hope better from your Hands, Sir, and that I ſhall be able to convince you that I don't act out of Caprice, and that the Reſolution I have taken to conceal myſelf from that much lov'd Family, to whom I owe more than Life, is the only Part I can act conſiſtent with Gratitude, Duty and Virtue.

As to that, Madam, replied Mr. *Worthy*, tho' I cannot at preſent dive into the Reaſons that induce you to that Conduct, yet I have ſo good an Opinion of your Senſe, both from the Character I have had of you, and from what I have ſeen on this Occaſion,

that I flatter myſelf you will find it no difficult Matter to bring me and my Wife to any Meaſures you may think for your Good. In the mean time I hope you will favour me with your Company for a few Days till you can reſolve deliberately on what is proper for you to do. I ſhall now take Meaſures to do you Juſtice on your Perſecutors according to the Meaſure of Malice they have diſcovered in this Affair; for I think their Attempt to rob you under Colour of Juſtice of what juſtly belonged to you, deſerves ſevere Puniſhment. Alaſs, replied the now much comforted Fair, let me entreat you to think no more of them, but leave them to the Puniſhment of their own Conſciences. I owe ſo much to the honeſt Farmer, who I am ſure acted in this Affair againſt his Inclination, under the Influence of his Wife and Siſter, for the Succour he afforded me in my utmoſt Diſtreſs, that if he had done me much more Miſchief I ſhould never forgive myſelf if he ſuffered any thing on my Account; conſider, Sir, that if any Notice is taken of them it muſt make my Affair more publick and ſubject me to the malicious Sneers of an ignorant Mob, I beg of you then Sir, to diſmiſs them, for indeed I believe what they did was more out of Ignorance than Malice.

Mr. *Worthy* and his Lady were charm'd with the generous forgiving Temper of their fair Gueſt, ſo different from that Spirit of Revenge ſo grateful to little Minds in the fair Sex, and tho' they both reſented the Indignity offered her with great Zeal and Warmth, yet they choſe to give her the Pleaſure of yielding to her Entreaties on the Behalf of the worthleſs Proſecutors. The Parties were called in, and Mr. *Worthy* gave them a ſevere Reprimand, and intimated to them, that if it were not to gratify the tranſcendent Goodneſs of the young Lady that had been ſo maliciouſly injured, he would have made them Examples to deter others from proſtituting Juſtice to ſerve the villainous Purpoſes of Malice and Avarice, and then diſmiſſed them; but as for young *George*, he thanked him for the Zeal he had ſhown in her Behalf, tho' added he, *George*, you too, tho' ignorantly, offered her an Affront, when you durſt mention Love to one of her Rank, but I hope now that I inform you of the Reſpect due to her, you will ask her Pardon for that Offence; *George* look'd a little fooliſh, and was hammering out a Compliment, but Miſs interrupted him, told him he needed not be anxious about what had paſſed, that

ſhe

ſhe ſhould always eſteem him as one who had done her a very ſignal Service in procuring her being brought before that worthy Gentleman, and I hope, added ſhe, I ſhall have it in my Power to reward it. *George* made a low Bow, and ſeemed pleaſed that he had done good to one who ſo much deſerved it, and not a little vain of the Applauſe beſtowed on him by Mr. and Mrs. *Worthy*, and the whole Family, who kept Holiday for Joy of the young Lady's Delivery, and hooted the Conſtable and his Party out of Doors like ſo many Pick-pockets, and if it had not been for Mr. *Worthy*'s Steward, who was accidentally riding by, as they paſſed the Stables, the Servants and a great many of the Neighbours who followed them, had certainly ducked the Women in the Horſe-pond; but as he had not been at home, and conſequently ignorant of the Cauſe of their Quarrel, he ſaved them from a Diſcipline they richly deſerved, and which he would not have grudged them, had he known the Height of their Malice to the innocent Miſs *Summers*.

THE HISTORY OF A PARISH GIRL.

BOOK IV.

Containing ſome more of the diſaſtrous Part of Miſs *Summers*'s Hiſtory, but concluding with Part of that Happineſs, which I'm ſure every virtuous and good-natur'd Reader thinks ſhe deſerves, and wiſhes her to enjoy.

CHAP. I.

Containing the Author's laſt Addreſs to his Readers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I Have left the charming Miſs *Summers* in cloſe Chat with the diſcreet Mrs. *Worthy*, who is hearing with great Attention the fair Unfortunate's Story, and commending

mending the virtuous Motive of her Reſolution, but endeavouring to perſuade her to return to Lady *Bountiful*'s Houſe, who are all in Confuſion for her Abſence. As that Argument may laſt for two or three Days, for aught I know, I thought beſt to leave them to ſettle the important Point between them, ſince it would be enough for me to know the Reſult of their friendly Debate, and that I could not ſpend my Time better than in a little *tête a tête* Converſation with my Readers, which may be the laſt Time I ſhall have an Opportunity; for as my Favourite Miſs *Summers* is pretty well grown up, it is Time to provide her with a Huſband, and as my other Heroine the Lady *Bountiful* is grown pretty old and ſtands much in my Way, it is full Time to think of ſending her to her Grave, at leaſt I am ſure Sir *Thomas* thinks ſo, and you know all theſe Things are Matters of great Moment, and require a good deal of neceſſary Preparation: For old as ſhe is, I cannot knock the good Lady on the Head without ſome little Ceremony, nor can I marry the Girl to the firſt Man I meet; beſides ſhe has ſtill a little of the Woman in her, ſhe is ſomewhat ſelf-willed, and the Baronet runs ſo much in her Head, that I ſhall have much ado to perſuade her to give her Hand at all

to another; therefore, as I have ſo much to do, I muſt be excuſed giving any more private Audience to my Readers, but haſten to prepare and invite them to the Wedding of my pretty Pariſh Girl, but I muſt in this place, make a Party amongſt the Fair to ſave the Author of the Pariſh Girl, from the mercileſs Perſecution of the numerous Tribe of Criticks, who may find Materials ſufficient in this Work to employ their malicious Talents of finding Fault. I have already diſclaimed their Juriſdiction, which I know muſt inhance their Spleen, and perhaps put it into their Heads to preſs me to Death according to the antiquated practice of the Common Law, for not holding up my Hand at their Bar and pleading Guilty, or not Guilty; but if I have the Fair Sex of *Great Britain* on my Side, againſt whom I hope I have not offended in any unpardonable Degree, I ſhall ſuffer the *Pien forè Dure* with Heroic Conſtancy, and laugh at the pointleſs Malice of my dull Perſecutors.

My ſole Intention in theſe Sheets has been to recommend Gratitude, Sincerity, and Conſtancy, with a rational Dependance on the Divine Protection, as well as a religious Reſignation to his Will, in the higheſt

higheſt Diſtreſſes of human Life, and in the Incidents I have made uſe of to inculcate theſe Virtues on the Mind of my Readers, I have ſuppoſed nothing, but what, not only may happen in common Life, but what to my own Knowledge has happened more than once, for I may here take the liberty to aſſure the Publick, that the Character of Lady *Bountiful* and Miſs *Summers* owe ſcarce any thing to Invention, except Names of Perſons and Places, and ſuch other Embelliſhments, as I thought, might render the Narrative more entertaining, and were neceſſary to adjuſt it to the manner of Writing I had pitched upon as my Plan.

I don't know whether the Virtues by which I have endeavoured to diſtinguiſh the Character of Miſs *Summers* are ſuch as may recommend her to a Place in the Drawing-room.—— Perhaps her Sincerity, may be reckoned unpolite, her Gratitude for Benefits received unfaſhionable in that Air, where Want of Memory in matters of that Kind is looked upon as a neceſſary Accompliſhment amongſt the Great; her Conſtancy in Diſtreſs may be ſatyrical to the delicate *Petit Maitres*, who would faint under half the Fatigue ſhe underwent

in Defence of her Virtue, and her Dependance on, and Acknowledgment of the Superintendance of a ſupream Being, may be eſteemed as an unfaſhionable Enthuſiaſm unbecoming the Freedom of the Age, who are aſhamed of nothing ſo much as of owning themſelves actuated by the Dictates of Religion and Piety; I ſay all this may be objected to her at a certain polite Corner of this Metropolis, and the Inhabitants there may be aſhamed to converſe with my pretty Pariſh Girl in Publick, but I hope by far the greater Part of the Female Inhabitants of *London* and *Weſtminſter* will vouchſafe her an Aſylum in their Cloſet, and ſpend an hour with Virtue and Innocence, when they can ſpare it from the important Affairs of Vice and Folly, and are at liberty, without danger of being laughed at by faſhionable Fools, to indulge the Sentiments of Religion and Humanity, which this little Hiſtory is deſigned to advance.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Containing Miſs Summers's *Tranſactions during her Stay at Mr.* Worthy's, *her narrow Eſcape from Sir* Thomas, *and her ſetting out for* London.

IN two or three Days after Miſs *Summers*'s Delivery from the Perſecution of the Farmer and his Family, when I thought ſhe had reſted herſelf ſufficiently, and that ſhe and Mrs. *Worthy* had finiſhed that Part of their Converſation which my Readers and I might gueſs at without Conjuration, I thought proper to take a walk down to Mr. *Worthy*'s, put on my conjuring inviſible Cap, and pop'd in upon the Ladies without their once dreaming that any thing Male was within a hundred Yards of them. What would Sir *Thomas Bountiful* have given to have been in my Place, what would not Mr. *Crofts* have ſuffered to have ſeen her as I did, or indeed what would not any young Fellow of Spirit, not quite debilitated with Age or Diſeaſes, have given to have ſeen one of the fineſt Women in *England* in the Bloom of Eighteen, with all her Charms heighten'd with conſcious Inno-

cence, and her Cheeks glowing with the ſincere Approbation of her own Conſcience, and what is next to that, the unfeigned Praiſes of a Female Friend, whoſe Sincerity ſanctified her Words, and whoſe ſolid Judgment juſtified being pleaſed with her Approbation. I gazed and admired her, as I think I never ſaw her ſo lovely as at that Inſtant; and yet the Pleaſure I took in beholding her in a very bewitching Attitude, for ſhe had juſt laced her Stays, her ſnowy Boſom all bare, and was tying her Garter above the Knee, little ſuſpecting who was ſo near her; yet notwithſtanding, I ſay, all this Advantage, the Pleaſure I took in viewing her had nothing tumultuous in it, nothing ſenſual, nor the leaſt Connection with her Sex; but it was ſuch, as Virtue alone can inſpire in the moſt brutiſh; ſomething, I ſuppoſe, like that Emotion we muſt feel, when free'd from this clog of Sin and Senſe, and ſhall meet on our firſt Entrance into Eternity, with ſome of the immaterial Inhabitants of the Regions of peaceful Bliſs.

Mrs. *Worthy* and ſhe, were juſt in the Cloſe of a Converſation wherein Miſs *Summers* had with great Strength of Reaſon and Delicacy of Sentiment, convinced her

Friend

Friend that it was her Intereſt not to venture to return to Lady *Bountiful*'s Family, or give them any notice where ſhe ſhould be until Time had reduced Sir *Thomas* to Reaſon, and help'd him to forget a Paſſion which that young Creature herſelf allow'd was neither for his Honour or Intereſt, according to the Notions that at this time prevail in the polite World; and Mrs. *Worthy* charm'd with her exalted and diſintereſted Virtue had been beſtowing on her all thoſe Praiſes due to her matchleſs Worth, and lamenting that a Virtue ſo refined ſhould meet with ſo many Misfortunes as that unhappy young Lady had lately underwent, and the Ways of Providence, added Mrs. *Worthy*, juſt as I had taken my inviſible Station, are difficult if not impoſſible to trace; it may ſeem ſtrange to our limited Underſtandings, that Perſons in the purſuit of ſtrict Virtue and Innocence ſhould meet with ſo many and ſo great Calamities, while perhaps others in chace of Vice and Folly are followed by an uninterrupted Series of Proſperity and worldly Happineſs; but if we call in Religion to our aid, and fortify our ſtaggering Reaſon with juſt Notions of that Being who ſuperintends all our Actions, we may reſt ſatisfied, that every thing

that

that happens to us, however adverſe it may ſeem for the preſent, yet in the end muſt turn out more to our Advantage than the moſt alluring Smiles of proſperous Fortune; nor ſhould we my dear Miſs neglect on ſuch occaſions to examine ourſelves ſtrictly how far we have contributed to bring ourſelves into the Diſaſters we complain of, in order to rectify our Conduct for the future, for we are not to expect that Providence is to work daily Miracles to ſave us from thoſe Miſhaps our own Imprudence or Inattention has brought upon us. We are indued with Reaſon and Judgment to guide us through the common Occurrences of Life, and if we fail in the proper Uſe, we muſt not blame Providence if the Event does not anſwer our Expectation. The Motives, my dear Miſs, which induced you to leave Lady *Bountiful* are certainly juſt and noble, and can be only the Reſult of ſteady Virtue; but forgive me if I put you in mind, that you undertook it rather too raſhly, without conſulting the Dangers you plung'd yourſelf into, or taking the proper Meaſures to prevent thoſe Misfortunes that might be expected in ſuch an Adventure. If you had open'd your Mind to ſome Perſon of Experience, tho' they might have approv'd of your

your Departure, yet they would have help'd your Eſcape in a manner that might have prevented theſe Diſaſters, out of which you have been reliev'd almoſt by a Miracle; and no doubt, if we ſuppoſe a particular or ſpecial Providence in the Caſe, it would have been as eaſy for that unerring Power to have directed your Steps to your Journey's End without permitting you to fall into the Hands of the Ruffians, as to have ſaved you from their Violence after they met you; but, by this Order of Things, you have been taught this Leſſon, not to depend too much on your own Judgment for the future, and the Neceſſity of your Dependance on divine Providence is ſtrongly enforced, which may be of great Uſe to you thro' the remaining Part of your Life, and you may profit more by it, by making this Uſe of it, than if you had got ſafe to *London* without any croſs Accident.

Miſs *Summers* liſten'd with great Attention to the friendly Leſſon, and told her Friend, that in all that had befallen her, ſhe ſaw not only a ſpecial Providence, but could now plainly diſcover her own Imprudence and Want of Conduct, which ſhe would endeavour to rectify for the time to come,

come, by praying for the divine Aſſiſtance, and truſting to her Diſcretion whoſe Advice might be of uſe to her unexperienced Years, and which ſhe had reaſon from the humane Treatment ſhe had already ſhewn her, to expect that ſhe would be ſo good as to afford her. That my dear *Charlotte* is the Point I am at, I only would prevail on you, to put ſome Share of Confidence in me, that I might have it in my Power to ſerve you; for I was afraid, the fear of your being diſcovered might induce you to make a ſecret to me of your future Intentions, which made me urge the Imprudence of relying entirely on your own Judgment. You have now determined on never returning to Lady *Bountiful*, its neceſſary for you to reſolve on ſome Method to carry you thro' the World free from thoſe Dangers to which your Youth and Form expoſe you; they are many, my dear Creature, and I am anxious to know how you deſign to diſpoſe of yourſelf. You have refuſed ſtaying with me, where nothing ſhould be wanting in my Power to make you eaſy, I wiſh your Reaſons for leaving me were leſs urgent, for I aſſure you nothing would give me more real Pleaſure than to have you always near me; but be aſſured, wherever

wherever you are, your Happineſs ſhall be dear to me.

Miſs return'd, to theſe affectionate Aſſurance of Mrs. *Worthy*'s, an Anſwer full of Gratitude, and added, That ſhe thought the moſt proper Method to diſpoſe of herſelf, would be to endeavour when ſhe got to *London*, to get into the Service of ſome Lady of Character, where ſhe might have an Opportunity of living retired from the World, and forgetting that ever ſhe had any Proſpect of being more happy; for, continued ſhe, tho' perhaps I might by my Needle, make a ſhift to earn a Subſiſtance, yet in that State I ſhould be entirely left to my own Direction, which I know is not ſufficient to protect me from the Snares and Temptations of the World; whereas in reputable Service, my Station will ſave me from many, and the Advice and Protection of a Miſtreſs enable me to withſtand the reſt.

It grieves me return'd Mrs. *Worthy*, to think that a young Creature of your Senſe and Merit, ſhould be oblig'd to ſerve; but I cannot help preferring that to a precarious Dependance on your Needle; a falſe Pride and a Love of Independance, as they

they think it, induces a great many young Women to prefer that Way of Life to the moſt reputable Service; but the many and innumerable Miſcarriages of ſuch infatuated young Creatures, ought to deter others from following their Example, and I'm rejoiced that you think in this ſo juſtly, as indeed you do in every thing far beyond your Years. Oh Lady *Bountiful* how I envy your Happineſs, how exquiſite muſt be your Pleaſure, when you reflect, that you have been inſtrumental in forming a Mind with ſuch exalted Notions of Virtue and Honour? It ſhall be my care Miſs *Summers*, to think of a Family where I can place you, and where you ſhall be treated in ſome Meaſure worthy of your Merit, but I give you my Word, I ſhall diſcover no more of your Secret on that Occaſion, than what you ſhall approve of. Then pauſing a little, bleſs me, continued ſhe, how lucky is it that I juſt now thought of it; I have juſt recollected that Mrs. *Davis* of ——— wants a Companion; about three Weeks ago ſhe wrote me, that Mrs. *Brown* who had been with her in that Station for theſe twelve Years, was on the point of being married, if ſhe is not already ſupplied, ſhe will prove, if poſſible, another Lady *Bountiful* to you; ſhe is an old

Lady

Lady of as many amiable Qualities as any under the Sun, and has no Children, and and lives very retired, one half of the Year in Town, and the other half in *Yorkſhire*; if you approve of it, I ſhall write to her this very Poſt; if I can my dear *Charlotte* place you in that Lady's Family, all my Fears about you are vaniſhed.

The Character Mrs. *Worthy* gave of Mrs. *Davis* was ſuch, as left Miſs *Summers* no room to heſitate in giving her Conſent that the Lady ſhould write to her Friend, and the Thought that ſhe was in a probable Way of being ſettled free from all Temptations, gave a Chearfulneſs to her Countenance, that convinced Mrs. *Worthy*, that ſhe could not do her fair Gueſt a more acceptable Office than to haſten a Project which gave her ſo much Pleaſure in Expectation.

Mrs. *Worthy* wrote that ſame Night to Mrs. *Davis*, and had a Return in four or five Days, " That Mrs. *Brown* was ſtill " with her, and would continue for about " a Month or ſix Weeks, but at that time, " ſhe would be glad to receive any Perſon " recommended by ſo dear a Friend as " Mrs. *Worthy*.

That

That Lady no ſooner received this Letter than ſhe ran with open Arms to Miſs *Summers*, and embracing her with great Affection, Its done, my dear Miſs I have Mrs. *Davis*'s Promiſe, which I know is ſacred, there is the Letter, you may read it; there is nothing in it but friendly Compliments, and what concerns you, and as for the little Delay, I am doubly pleaſed with that, becauſe I have now inſur'd ſix Weeks of your Company whether you will or not. Miſs *Summers* returned her Careſſes in a manner that ſhewed the Senſe ſhe had of the Service done her, and ſeem'd, nay, I'm ſure, was really better pleas'd, and felt more rational Joy, on being aſſur'd of the Place, tho' a Place of Servitude, than another probably could be on hearing that they were to be one of the Maids of Honour to a Queen, or the moſt lucrative and honourable Place at Court: How amiable muſt Virtue be! when it can render a Tranſition from the faireſt Proſpect of Wealth and Grandeur, to the loweſt Condition in Life, not only tolerable but Matter of the higheſt Pleaſure! and that to a Female Mind too, where Equipage, Place and Precedence, and the other noiſy Appurtenances of Wealth and Grandeur

are

are, generally ſpeaking, too deeply rooted to admit of any Pleaſure that interferes with them.

Notwithſtanding that Mrs. *Worthy* and all her Family did all in their Power to render the Time Miſs was obliged to ſtay in the Family as agreeable as poſſible, yet, the Fear ſhe was daily under of being known by ſome of the Gentlemen of the County, or their Servants who came to viſit Mr. *Worthy*, ſowered a great deal of that Satisfaction ſhe would otherwiſe have taken in their Converſation. She ſtill retained the feigned Name of Miſs *Sally Dickens*, and her real Secret was known only to Mr. and Mrs. *Worthy*, yet the Affair at the Farmer's, and the Manner of her coming to the Acquaintance of that Family was ſo publick in the Neighbourhood, that a great many came out of mere Curioſity to ſee her, and gave her great Uneaſineſs leſt they ſhould find any Reſemblance between her Story and that of Miſs *Summers*, which was now known all over the County. It happened that for the firſt three Weeks her Fears proved vain, but then an Accident happened which convinced her that her Fears were not without ſome reaſonable Foundation, and obliged her to alter in ſome Meaſure,

ſure, the Scheme ſhe and Mrs. *Worthy* had projected.

Mr. *Worthy* about this Time went to the Aſſizes held for the County of *Caermarthen*, where at a public Table with the Judges and moſt of the Gentlemen of that County, amongſt whom was Sir *Thomas Bountiful*, a Neighbour of Mr. *Worthy*'s asked him publickly how his beautiful Gueſt was, and ſpoke of her in ſuch high Terms that it raiſed the Curioſity of ſome preſent to ask who that Beauty was, on whom he was ſo laviſh of his Praiſes, and of whom they had not heard. Mr. *Worthy*, knowing the Conſequence of ſuch Diſcourſe turned the Converſation, but the reſt of the Gentlemen, in a Vein of Raillery reſumed the Subject in deſpite of him, and the Gentleman who firſt mentioned her, not imagining Mr. *Worthy* had any Reaſon for making a Secret of what was ſo publickly tranſacted, related to the Company the whole Hiſtory of the ſuppoſed Miſs *Sally Dickens*, with every Particular relating to her Eſcape from the Ruffians in the Lane, and was very facetious on the Plot the Farmer had formed of marrying her to his Son. The Company was pleaſed with the little Narrative, ſaid it would make a good Subject for a Novel,

Novel, but began to enquire amongſt themſelves to what Family of the *Dickens* this celebrated Beauty belonged, for there were two or three of ſome Note in that and the adjacent County.

Sir *Thomas Bountiful*, from the firſt Mention of the Lady, found a Fluttering about his Heart he could not account for, and liſtened to her Story with great Attention, and at all the Turns of the Narrative ſeemed deeply affected with the Lady's Diſtreſs; when it was ended, he fell into a deep Study, out of which he ſtarted all of a ſudden, in a mighty Flurry. Pray Mr. *Worthy*, ſays he, can you recollect the Night the Farmer ſaid he met this young Lady? I do not, ſays Mr. *Worthy*, in a moſt viſible Confuſion, obſerving that Sir *Thomas* had taken the Hint, but I believe it might be ſome Day laſt Month, putting it back farther than the Time he knew Miſs *Summers* made her Eſcape. I wiſh, replied Sir *Thomas* with great Emotion, that you could be certain as to the Time. The Time, replied the Gentleman who ſpoke firſt, interrupting Mr. *Worthy*, before he had time to anſwer, I can tell you to a Minute, it was the Night after the Fair of *Old Radnor*; for the Farmer was returning from thence, where he had been

been to ſell ſome Cattle, and that Fair you know was on *Tueſday* the third of laſt Month. Before God, returned Sir *Thomas*, in great Agitation, with all the Marks of extreme Joy in his Countenance, it anſwers to a Minute, and I'll lay my Life the Miſs *Dickens* you have been ſpeaking of is no other than the charming Miſs *Summers*; it can be none elſe, no body but ſhe deſerves the Praiſe you have beſtowed on Miſs *Dickens*; none could behave, in ſuch Circumſtances, in the Manner you have related, but the lovely Miſs *Summers*. The whole Company joined in Opinion with Sir *Thomas*, and were ſurprized they had not hit upon it before.

Mr. *Worthy* told them it was impoſſible, that his Wife knew Miſs *Dickens* and all her People very well, and could not be miſtaken, and had received Letters from ſome of her Relations in *London*, to whom ſhe was ſetting out, and would probably be gone before he returned.

This Evaſion would not ſatisfy Sir *Thomas*; on the contrary, the Words being gone gave him the Alarm, and he ſtarted from the Table, and ſwore he would go immediately and ſatisfy himſelf with his own Eyes, for his Mind

Mind ſuggeſted it to him ſo ſtrongly that it was Miſs *Summers*, that nothing leſs than ocular Demonſtration would ſatisfy him.

The good-natured Mr. *Worthy* was highly perplexed how to behave to prevent a Diſcovery, which he ſaw, by the Specimen of Sir *Thomas*'s violent Temper, was of more Importance to the young Lady than he formerly believed it.

To oppoſe his going, he ſaw would only determine him the more in his Notions, therefore he judged it beſt to comply with his Humour and to attend him himſelf on his Journey, tho' the Buſineſs which brought him to the Aſſizes was not yet finiſhed, hoping as they could not reach his Houſe that Night he might find ſome means to give his Wife Notice of this unwelcome Viſit.

It was with ſome Difficulty the amorous Baronet could be prevailed on by the Company to ſtay till Dinner was over, though that Time was neceſſary to get their Horſes ready. As Mr. *Worthy* told him he would accompany him, he deſired, leave of Sir *Thomas* to ſtep for ten Minutes to the next Inn to give ſome Orders relating to an Affair he was concerned in at the Aſſizes. Not-

withſtanding the Knight's violent Hurry, good Manners obliged him to ſubmit to the Delay, which Mr. *Worthy* made uſe of in writing a ſhort Line to his Lady, acquainting her in few Words with the Reaſon of Sir *Thomas*'s Viſit, and leaving the Management of the whole to her Prudence; which he diſpatched by a truſty Meſſenger, who was directed to make as much Speed with it as if Life and Death depended on it.

The Roads were not over and above good, and the Night exceeding dark, at which Mr. *Worthy* was by no Means diſpleaſed, as it retarded Sir *Thomas*, and gave him greater Hopes that his Meſſenger would get to his Houſe ſome Hours before them. They travelled till near Midnight, and then was obliged to put up till Morning, on Account of their Horſes that were very much jaded. They arrived at Mr. *Worthy*'s Houſe about nine o' Clock next Morning, and found Mrs. *Worthy* in the Parlour waiting their Arrival, tho' to them ſhe put on an Air of great Surprize at ſeeing Mr. *Worthy* ſo ſuddenly returned. After Mr. *Worthy* had introduced Sir *Thomas* to his Lady, he told her the Cauſe of Sir *Thomas*'s Viſit, and begged that Miſs *Dickens* might be called, that he might be cured of his Suſpicions,

cions, which added he, I muſt own, appear to have ſome Foundation. Mrs. *Worthy* told the impatient Baronet, that ſhe was glad of any thing that was the Occaſion of her receiving the Honour of a Viſit from a Gentleman for whom ſhe had ſo great an Eſteem, but was ſorry that his Journey would not afford him the Satisfaction he expected; for indeed, ſays ſhe, I can aſſure you the young Lady in my Houſe is not Miſs *Summers*, but a young Gentlewoman of a very good Family tho' reduced, and going to *London* to wait on a Lady to whom ſhe has Recommendations; but you ſhall ſee the young Woman, I ſuppoſe ſhe is now ſtirring, I think I heard her up as I paſſed her Chamber. Sir *Thomas* replied with a Sigh, that he was afraid indeed the Hopes he had conceived of ſeeing Miſs *Summers* were ill founded, but hoped ſhe would excuſe his Curioſity for preſſing for a Sight of this young Lady, who by Mr. *Winfield*'s Deſcription of her, meaning the Gentleman who firſt brought up the Diſcourſe at *Caermarthen*, muſt very much reſemble the unhappy Miſs *Summers*.

Mrs. *Worthy* rung the Bell for a Servant and deſired her to ſtep up with her Com-

pliments to Miſs *Dickens*, and to tell her ſhe begged her Company in the Parlour.

When Sir *Thomas* heard a Foot upon the Stair-Caſe his Heart went pit a pat, for it was impoſſible for him to diveſt himſelf of the Notion that Miſs *Dickens* could be any body elſe than Miſs *Summers*; and when the Door opened he gave a ſudden Start from his Chair as if he would throw himſelf into her Arms, and was almoſt at the Door before he recovered himſelf, which was only into a melancholy Surprize. He ſaw a young Lady enter pretty much of the Size, Make, and nearly of Miſs *Summers*'s Complexion, but how vaſtly wide, at leaſt in his Eyes, was the Difference in the Air, the Mien, and Features of the two Perſons; he was amaz'd that Deſcription ſhould give a Likeneſs to two Objects ſo vaſtly different in their Nature.

He was ſo ſhocked with the Diſappointment, that though the Manner in which he left the Chair and met the Lady on her Entrance, he ought in Decency to have paid her his Compliments; yet he was mute and unable to utter a word. Mrs. *Worthy* ſaw his Confuſion, and heartily pitied the Concern ſhe ſaw him in. This Sir *Thomas*, ſaid ſhe,

ſhe, is Miſs *Dickens*, an Accquaintance of mine for whom I have a great Eſteem, which recovered the Baronet in ſome manner to his Senſes, and enabled him to ſalute Miſs *Dickens*, tho' in a very conſtrain'd and awkward manner. Sir *Thomas* was for ſome time ſilent, at laſt addreſſing himſelf to Mr. *Worthy*, I am heartily aſham'd Sir, that my Folly has given you ſo much Trouble; but if you knew, how much the Fate of Miſs *Summers* is connected with my Happineſs, you would not blame me for catching at every thing that gave me the leaſt Hopes of recovering the Dear Wanderer, who is wretched perhaps only becauſe I am fooliſh. He ſpoke this with ſuch paſſionate Sincerity, that the Good-natur'd Mr. *Worthy* was ſorry he was not at liberty to indulge him with a Sight of what he priz'd ſo much, and aſſured him that he thought any thing that contributed to Sir *Thomas Bountiful*'s Satisfaction far from being troubleſome; but continued he, in a Voice more chearful, as we have the Pleaſure of your Company on the Occaſion, I hope you'll not think of leaving us, for a few Days; I have lately got a Pack of freſh Hounds, which I have not tried, and ſhould be glad of your Company Tomorrow, after you are recovered from laſt Night's Fatigue.

Sir *Thomas*, whoſe Mind was never at Eaſe but when he was rambling in ſearch of his adored Miſs *Summers*, politely excuſed himſelf, and begged he might be permitted to go immediately. Mr. *Worthy* judg'd it would be inconvenient to be very preſſing for his Stay at that Time, and contented himſelf with his Promiſe to return when he was capable of being more tolerable Company; and the Baronet after being prevailed on, with much Difficulty to ſtay Dinner, took Horſe in the Evening, on his Return to *Bounty-Park*.

When Mr. *Worthy* returned to the Parlour from ſeeing Sir *Thomas* to his Horſe, he found Miſs *Summers* and the Repreſentative of Miſs *Dickens* rejoicing with Mrs. *Worthy* on the Succeſs of their little Plot. Mr. *Worthy* embraced the fair Actreſs and complimented her highly on the Manner ſhe had acted her Part, and entered into a ſhort Raillery on ſeveral little Incidents in the Converſation where ſhe was in Danger of being embarraſſed, and in Commendation of the Quickneſs of her Wit in recovering herſelf. But added he, pray tell me to whom ſhall I aſcribe

aſcribe the Contrivance of this Eſcape; for my Part I was in ſuch Dread of a Diſcovery, that I could form no other Idea to myſelf to avoid it, but by Miſs's getting out of the Way, which was the Reaſon I ſent you the Expreſs, and which I concluded had happened when I found you in the Parlour with ſo much Content and Compoſure in your Looks, but when you ſent up for Miſs *Dickens* and denied her to be Miſs *Summers*, I was quite at a Loſs what to think: but you have play'd your Part ſo handſomely I ſhall recommend each of you to a Place in the Playhouſe; but tell me who is the Author, the Actors deſerve much, but the Author more Praiſe. Indeed Mr. *Worthy*, I think you need not be long gueſſing, replied Mrs. *Worthy*, for my Part I have no Claim to it, I ſhould make but a dull dramatick Writer, and Miſs *Summers* was in ſuch a dreadful Fright, that till within this Hour I cannot properly ſay ſhe has been ſenſible; for on the Arrival of your Expreſs, and my reading her your Letter, ſhe fainted away two or three Times; and when ſhe was about to ſpeak, it was only to beg to be carried out of the Houſe, which had certainly been done if ſhe had been able, or in any Condition to be removed, but it could not be

done, unleſs it had been in a Coffin, for ſhe was fit for no other Carriage.

As we were every Moment in dread of your coming, for my Share, I think I never paſſed two or three Hours in ſuch exquiſite Agony, what with Concern to ſee the dear Creature ſo afflicted, and the Uneaſineſs I was in that I could think of no Means to ſave her from what ſhe dreaded ſo much, I was ready to go diſtracted. My Couſin *Maria* came to the Houſe juſt as you took Horſe, and ſhared in all our Perplexity, tho' ſhe was ignorant of the real Cauſe. I judged that by the half Expreſſions Miſs dropped in her Intervals and the frequent Whiſpers ſhe and I had, that *Maria* muſt ſuſpect ſome Myſtery, and perhaps might think it worſe than it was, therefore to eaſe myſelf and have the Advantage of her Advice, I let her into the whole Secret, which I think was a great Happineſs; for in an Inſtant her ready Wit hit upon the Plot you have ſeen executed, which has ſucceeded beyond all poſſible Expectation.

The amiable Miſs *Summers* returned her unfeigned Acknowlegments to the two Ladies for the Tenderneſs they had expreſſed for her, and thanked Mr. *Worthy* for the Trouble

Trouble he had taken on her Account. But, added ſhe, tho' we have hitherto eſcaped, yet ſince the Country has got it into their Heads that Miſs *Dickens* and the unhappy *Charlotte Summers* are indeed the ſame Perſon, the innocent Impoſition we have put upon Sir *Thomas* may be yet diſcover'd, and not only the Place of my Retreat known, but my beſt Friends may be involv'd in his Diſpleaſure for aſſiſting in the Cheat. Therefore I hope my dear Mrs. *Worthy* will not think me peeviſhly anxious, if I deſire to leave her as ſoon as poſſible, ſince the Danger is ſo great in my ſtaying, and that no other Inconvenience can happen in my ſetting out for *London* immediately, but my lying concealed in ſome private Houſe in the City till Mrs. *Davis* ſhall have Occaſion for me.

This Suggeſtion of Miſs was too reaſonable not to meet with proper Regard; and though it was almoſt Death to the friendly and affectionate Mrs. *Worthy* to part with her, yet ſhe conſented that ſhe ſhould ſet out on the next Day but one. Miſs propoſed to have gone by the Stage from *Cowan-Gathbury*, as had been her firſt Plan, but Mr. *Worthy* would not conſent to it, but ſent his own Chair and Four with her thirty Miles further, to the Houſe of a Gentle-

man that lay on the Poſt-Road, who would ſee her into the Stage from thence with greater Privacy, than if ſhe had gone from *Cowan Gathbury*, where her Story, as Miſs *Dickens*, was public, and where it might follow her to *London*, by Means of the Paſſengers from thence.

The Morning for her Departure arrived, and the motherly Mrs. *Worthy* furniſhed her with a Portmantua, into which ſhe put Gowns, and other Apparel, without conſulting Miſs *Summers* about it, and would not permit her to examine it, but ſaw her pack up the little ſhe had brought from the Farmer's, and gave it to the Servant that was to attend her, till he ſaw her in the Stage. The Parting with the good-natured Miſs *Maria* and Mrs. *Worthy*, was truly tender; both expreſſing the utmoſt Regard for the fair Traveller, and ſhe in making the moſt grateful Acknowledgments that the Senſe of ſuch friendly Treatment could inſpire a virtuous Mind with. At laſt they parted with mutual Tears, and repeated Promiſes of the moſt ſincere Friendſhip, and Mr. *Worthy* handed her to the Chair, and at parting with her made a handſome Apology, that he took the Liberty to trouble her with a Letter to a Friend of his at *London*, which

he

he begged ſhe might deliver by ſome truſty Hand, ſo ſoon as ſhe arrived. She took the Letter, aſſuring him that ſhe would take Pleaſure in executing his Commands; and order'd the Coachman to drive on, made him and the Ladies who were at the Window a low Bow, and ſet out with a Heart ſenſibly touch'd at parting with Friends of ſo uncommon a Share of Generoſity. She had ſtill the Letter in her Hand, which ſhe was about to put into her Pocket, when ſhe obſerv'd that it had only a Flying Seal, by which ſhe gueſſed rightly that it was left ſo on Purpoſe for her Peruſal, and expected that it might be a Letter of Recommendation to the Friendſhip of ſome Perſon of Worth, when, on opening it, ſhe found it was no more nor leſs than an Order on —— ——— a Banker, for the Payment of twenty Pounds to her or Order, by the Name of Miſs *Sally Dickens.* The Value of the Preſent had nothing in it to elate her Spirits, as ſhe was far from being of a covetous Diſpoſition, but the polite Manner in which ſo conſiderable a Preſent was made her, doubly enhanced the Value of it, and endeared the generous Giver to her grateful Heart. The Thoughts of the remarkable Protection divine Providence had afforded her in reſcuing her from ſuch imminent

Danger, and raiſing her up ſo valuable a Friendſhip as that of the Family of Mr. *Worthy*, by the very means which the Malice of her Enemies had projected for her Ruin, confirmed her in her virtuous Reſolution, gave her chearful Hopes that ſometime or other her Misfortunes would have a happy Iſſue, and made her Journey pleaſant and eaſy. She arrived ſafe that Night at the Houſe of Mr. *Worthy*'s Friend, who received her with all the Marks of Eſteem and Affection ſhe could deſire. A Place was taken for her that ſame Night in the Stage for *London*, for which ſhe ſet out early next Morning, and happened to meet with very civil Uſage from the Paſſengers in the Stage, and arrived ſafe at her Journey's End without any croſs Accident.

CHAP. III.

Containing her firſt Acquaintance with Captain Price, *and her Viſit to Mrs.* Barnet *the famous Fortune-teller in the Old-Baily.*

AS Mrs. *Worthy* knew Miſs was not to go home to her Place for about a Fortnight after her Arrival at *London*, beſide ſtrong Recommendations to her intended

tended Miſtreſs, Mrs. *Davis*, ſhe furniſh'd her with a Letter to one Mrs. *Morrice* a grave Widow Gentlewoman, with whom Mrs. *Worthy* and her Family generally lodg'd when in Town, deſiring that Gentlewoman to furniſh Miſs with Lodgings, and to be particularly tender of her for the Time ſhe might be out of Place.

Miſs no ſooner alighted at the Inn, than ſhe took a Coach and went directly for Mrs. *Morrice*'s, who on the Receipt of Mrs. *Worthy*'s Letter, receiv'd her with great Reſpect and Civility, and regretted that ſhe had it not in her Power to furniſh her with an Apartment in her own Houſe, as ſhe was at that time full of Lodgers, but that ſhe would ſend to enquire for one proper for her, and would do her otherways all the Service in her Power. She ſent the Maid to two or three Places of her Acquaintance, but found all their Rooms engag'd, which gave Miſs great Uneaſineſs, as the Evening was pretty far advanced, and ſhe was very unwilling to lodge in any Houſe with which Mrs. *Morrice* was not perfectly well acquainted.

When the Maid had returned from enquiring at all the Places Mrs. *Morrice* could recollect

recollect without Succeſs, they were all at their Wits end, till the Maid, a forward brisk Girl ſaid, oh la Madam, I know a Houſe where the Gentlewoman may be provided in a very handſome two-pair of ſtairs Room forward; they are very civil People, I have a Couſin that is Maid there, its only hard by, if you pleaſe I'll go and beſpeak it. I could wiſh, reply'd Miſs, that Mrs. *Morrice* herſelf knew ſomething of the People, for they ſay Strangers cannot be too cautious here in *London:* You are in the Right Madam, returned Mrs. *Morrice*, to be upon your Guard, but I know the Girl is an honeſt Girl, ſhe has been with me theſe ſeveral Years, and durſt not mention a Place where you would not be ſafe; you can but go there for a Night or two till I have time to look out for another in caſe you ſhould not like it. Miſs had nothing to object, the Maid went and hired the Lodging, and Mrs. *Morrice* was ſo good natur'd as to go along with her, to recommend her in a particular manner to the Landlady, who appeared a decent Motherly-looking Woman, and at firſt Sight expreſs'd a more than ordinary Fondneſs for Miſs *Summers*, known now only by the Name of Miſs *Dickens*, by which Name

Name I ſhall mention her for the two or three following Chapters.

When Mrs. *Morrice* left her, the Landlady introduced her Daughter, a young Woman much about Miſs's Age, in whoſe Face there appeared ſo much ſeeming Innocence and plain good Nature, that Miſs readily conceived an Eſteem for her, and expreſſed her Satisfaction in having ſuch a Companion during the ſhort time ſhe ſhould ſtay in the Houſe. *Polly Wellers*, for that was the young Woman's Name, was not deficient in returning Miſs's Compliment, and in a little time a pretty ſtrict Intimacy commenced between them.

As Miſs was not to deliver her Letter to Mrs. *Davis* till about the time that Lady had intimated Mrs. *Brown* was to leave her, ſhe kept her Room for two or three Days to refreſh herſelf after her Journey; during which time, the Landlady and her Daughter *Polly* treated her with great Civility and did all in their Power to divert her, and ſhe could hear nothing in the Family but great Decency and Decorum. There were other Lodgers in the Houſe, but ſhe had ſeen none of them, and told Mrs. *Morrice*, who came to viſit her the ſecond Day after her coming

coming there, that ſhe believ'd ſhe was very well lodg'd, and was very well uſed.

The fourth Day ſhe and *Polly* took a Coach and went to the Bankers to receive Mr. *Worthy*'s Order, and was paid the Caſh directly, and from thence went to ſee the Tower and ſome other of the Curioſities in and about Town. They returned in the Evening after ſpending moſt of the Day abroad, and went into the Parlour, where Mrs. *Weller* the Landlady invited her to ſtay and ſup. They play'd at Cards to paſs the Time away till Supper was ſerv'd in, which was no ſooner on the Table, than a young ſpruce Officer of the Guards dreſſed as for the Drawing-room enter'd the Room, and was introduced to Miſs as a Gentleman that lodg'd in the firſt Floor. He accoſted her pretty familiarly, at which ſhe was not over and above ſurpriz'd, as ſhe paſs'd in the Houſe only for a young Woman that was going into the Service of a Lady of Quality: They all ſat down to Table, and the young Officer appeared all Life and Spirit, and ſaid a great many gallant things to Miſs, to which ſhe made but little anſwer, as ſhe affected to appear as much the Country Girl as poſſible, in order to conceal her real Circumſtances and keep

up

up the Character of *Sally Dickens*, deſigned only for a waiting Maid; but the familiar manner in which he ſtared at her gave her ſome Uneaſineſs, and as ſoon as Supper was over, ſhe made an Excuſe to retire immediately to her Chamber. The young Officer, who was by this time over Head and Ears in love with her Perſon, would have perſuaded her to ſtay a Game or two at Whiſt, but as ſhe ſeem'd averſe, he was oblig'd for that Time to let her have her way.

She went up to her Room and *Polly* followed in about a quarter of an Hour, and began to entertain her with the large Encomiums Captain *Price*, for that was the Military Beau's Name, had beſtow'd on her when ſhe left the Room. You have certainly, continued *Poll*, made a Conqueſt, he ſwears you have made a wound in his Heart larger than a Cannon Ball, and that he ſhall never ſleep for thinking of you. Who knows Miſs how things may turn out? he is a fine Gentleman, and has a fine Eſtate of two thouſand a Year, beſides his Commiſſion; ods me, its enough to make any Woman happy, and my Mother ſays, if ſhe has any Skill in Faces, ſomething muſt come of it, for you are very like the Gentleman

tleman, and ſeem cut out for one another; its better, my dear than going to Service, to be at the Beck of a Peeviſh old Woman, and ſnubbed at every turning of a Straw, or the miſplacing of a Pin. Why you are dumb, you don't ſeem rejoiced at it? upon my Life I ſhould be ready to jump out of my ſeven Senſes, if I had ſuch a Proſpect.

Miſs let her run on without Interruption, and out of pure good Nature attributed all ſhe ſaid to the Girl's ſeeming Simplicity, not in the leaſt ſuſpecting any Deſign in this long Rhodomontade, and told her laughing, that ſure her head was turn'd. What ſays ſhe, cannot a Gentleman banter a little, and ſay a few pretty Things to ſhew his Wit, but you muſt ſuppoſe him all of a ſudden ſerious? no, no Child, you are a Stranger to the Ways of the World, and muſt not take notice of every fine Speech theſe high-bred Folks ſay to the like of you or me; I warrant the Captain thinks no more of me than I do of him, and that is much leſs than I do of the Lions in the Tower we have been ſeeing to Day.

The Manner Miſs ſeem'd to take it encouraged *Polly* to perſiſt in her Diſcourſe, and to endeavour to convince Miſs *Dickens*, that

that what ſhe ſaid was not only poſſible, but probable, and gave her ſeveral Inſtances which ſhe ſaid ſhe knew herſelf, where Gentlemen of great Fortunes had fallen in Love with Women of her Station, merely for their Beauty, of which ſhe ſaid Miſs had as great a Share as any. Miſs turned all ſhe ſaid into railery and they parted that Night to their ſeveral Apartments.

As the Captain had ſaid or done nothing out of Character, and as ſhe looked upon all *Polly* had ſaid as proceeding from Ignorance of polite Converſation, ſhe made little or no Reflection upon what had happen'd, and a Day or two paſs'd without her ſeeing the Captain, but not an Hour without hearing of him from *Poll*, who made him her conſtant Theme.

On the third Day after, ſhe was invited to Tea in the Afternoon by her Landlady, and the Captain ſtumbled into the Parlour as by Chance, drunk a Diſh of Tea, paſs'd a few Compliments and amorous Ogles at Miſs, and went out again; on his firſt Appearance, Miſs began to be uneaſy as it look'd odd, that ſhe ſhould always meet him when invited by her Landlady; but as he behaved with a kind of polite Indifference, and ſaid nothing but what the little Remains of

Woman

Woman in her, made her believe her due, ſhe diſmiſs'd her Fears, and ſaw him two or three times afterwards on like Occaſions, without apprehending any Danger from his Company: on the contrary, as he appeared perfectly well bred, was very facetious, and treated her rather with more Reſpect, than ſhe merited as a deſigned Waiting-maid, ſhe was pleas'd with his Company, and expreſs'd no diſlike of making a Party at Whiſt with him, her Landlady and *Poll*.

Almoſt a Week paſs'd over in this Manner, and our young Officer grew every Day more Complaiſant to Miſs *Dickens*, and would have treated her to the Play in Company with Mrs. *Weller* and her Daughter; but that was a Step ſhe would not take, as not knowing the Conſequence, but moſtly for fear of being too publick, and running the Riſque of meeting with ſomebody ſhould know her; but to make amends, the Officer ſtaid at Home, and ſent for a Supper to the Tavern, which he had ſerved up in the Parlour, for he had ſo much Regard to the Reſerve Miſs kept upon, as not to invite her to his Apartment, nor to offer to wait upon her in her own, a kind of Behaviour which heighten'd the Eſteem Miſs began to conceive for the young Captain, and induced

duced her to indulge him in all the innocent well-bred Freedoms he could claim, which he unhappily explained into quite another Meaning, than what ever entered into the Heart of the undeſigning Fair.

A Night or two after this Entertainment, Miſs began to have Reaſon to be more upon her Guard with the Captain, and to conceive ſome Suſpicion of the Integrity of her Landlady and her ſeemingly ſimple Daughter. She had been out at Supper with Mrs. *Morrice*, who was the only Acquaintance ſhe had in *London*, and did not come home till paſt Eleven; Mrs. *Morrice*'s Maid waited on her to the Door, and ſhe went immediately up to her own Apartment, but was much ſurprized to hear Women's Tongues very loud in Captain *Price*'s Apartment, and amongſt the reſt her Landlady in a Dialect with the Captain, in no Degree ſuitable to a modeſt Woman. After ſhe got into her own Room, ſhe allow'd the Door to ſtand a little a jarr, prompted by Female Curioſity to hear as much as ſhe could, but the Converſation grew ſo warm that tho' unobſerved, ſhe durſt no longer give Ear to ſuch Diſcourſe, but flap'd the Door in a kind of Paſſion, to think that ſhe had been ſo much impos'd upon in her Opinion of that Woman, whom ſhe thought

thought the moſt diſcreet, ſober, ſanctified Creature ever ſhe knew.

On the Noiſe ſhe made in ſhutting the Door, the Company below Stairs who believ'd her abroad, and had not obſerv'd her go up Stairs, put a ſtop all of a ſudden to the loud Clamour of their Tongues, and the Houſe in a few Minutes became as quiet as Miſs had uſually obſerved it. However ſhe undreſs'd herſelf and went to Bed very uneaſy, and began to torment herſelf with a thouſand odd Reflections: She fretted at the Captain for having lewd Women (for ſhe could conceive them nothing elſe by their Diſcourſe) in his Apartments, and in an Inſtant loſt all the good Opinion ſhe had conceived of him, believed him a Rakiſh Hypocrite, and his Landlady, nothing better than a Procureſs; for ſhe imagined no honeſt Woman would permit ſuch Creatures to come into her Houſe, much leſs join in their Bawdy Converſation: from the Reflections on the Character of her Landlady and her Fellow Lodgers, ſhe began to be alarmed about her own Reputation, and the Danger ſhe run in ſuch Hands, and was ſo uneaſy ſhe ſcarce could ſhut her Eyes all Night, got up very early next Morning, and without ſeeing one in the Houſe went immediately

diately to Mrs. *Morrice* to communicate to her her Fears and Suſpicions.

Mrs. *Morrice* who was born in *Wales* happen'd, when Miſs came in, to be in one of her *Welſh* Humours; her Maid or ſomebody elſe, had raiſed her, and put her in a Paſſion, ſo that tho' ſhe made ſhift to calm the Storm on Sight of Miſs, and to receive her civilly; yet ſhe was ſo much ruffled as not to have Patience to enter into the Reaſonableneſs of Miſs's Fears: Miſs told her what ſhe had heard, and what ſhe dreaded from being in a Houſe with People of ſuch Principles, and beg'd of her to get her another Lodging for the two or three Days ſhe had to ſtay before ſhe went to her Place. Poh, Poh, Child, replied the peeviſh Mrs. *Morrice*, you are alarmed about nothing, I have enquir'd Mrs. *Weller*'s Character of ſome of the Neighbourhood, who ſay ſhe is a very orderly Woman, and I know Captain *Price* very well, he has an Eſtate in the ſame County I was born in, tho' I did not know he lodged there till Yeſterday I ſaw him at a Viſit I made to a Lady of my Acquaintance, I warrant he does you no Harm, what is it to you, what he does in his own Apartments, ſo long as he behaves decently to you; you have miſtaken the Voice of ſomebody

ſomebody elſe for the Landlady's, I'm ſur ſhe could make uſe of no ſuch naughty Expreſſions.

Miſs ſaw Mrs. *Morrice* in a kind of Heat, and ſuppoſed it owing to her reſenting her Suſpicion, and tho' ſhe could not altogether calm her Fears, was obliged to ſeem ſatisfied with what Mrs. *Morrice* had ſaid, whom ſhe found in no Diſpoſition to aſſiſt her to change her Lodgings, and without her Aid did not know how to help herſelf, went home, but reſolved to remain upon her Guard at all Events.

Her Landlady met her as ſhe came in, and rallied her on getting up ſo early. I was a-Bed ſays ſhe when I heard you go out, for indeed I was very late up laſt Night, as I did not come home till paſt twelve o'Clock, I hope I did not diſturb you by coming in. Miſs did not know what to make of it, and began really to fancy ſhe had miſtaken her Voice, and that the Captain had taken the Opportunity of her Abſence to introduce his Madams, which ſhe ſuppoſed he durſt not have done had ſhe been at Home. But tho' theſe Appearances eas'd her Fears in ſome Meaſure as to her Landlady, yet they could not remove the Impreſſions ſhe had conceived of the Captain

Captain, whom ſhe now treated, as often as ſhe ſaw him, with greater reſerve than before.

The next Day Miſs, the Landlady, and her Daughter were ſitting together, when a Gentlewoman of Mrs. *Weller*'s Acquaintance came to pay a Viſit: She was a Widow between 40 and 50, and by the Freſhneſs of her Weeds, her Husband did not appear to be above a Month or two dead: At her firſt coming in, and the Sight of a Stranger, ſhe affected to give her Face and Voice a melancholly demure Caſt; but the loquacious Tea-Table was no ſooner ſet in Order, than ſhe drop'd the Whine in her Voice, and converſed as facetiouſly as if that had been her Wedding Day. The Character of two or three of the Neighbours being handled with much Freedom according to Cuſtom, and the Slander of the Day pretty much exhauſted, the edifying Converſation turn'd upon Fortune-telling, and the Fame of a noted Female Artiſt in that Way. The Widow told them of a great many ſtray Silver Spoons ſhe had recover'd, and of a vaſt Number of Marriages and Miſcarriages ſhe had predicted, which had all taken Place, according to her Foreknowledge. You won't believe it, added ſhe,

Mrs. *Weller*, but I aſſure you what I am going to tell you is literally true, I heard it but laſt Night at Mrs. *Buzze*'s from the Lady's Maid I'm going to ſpeak of. Sure the Woman muſt deal with the Devil, or ſhe could not foreſee ſo many Things as ſhe does; why now Madam you muſt know, yes, yes, I know you do know her, I have heard you ſpeak of her, the rich Widow from *Durham*, Mrs. *Wouldhaveit*; why I can tell you ſhe is married within this Week to Mr. *Nimblefoot* the Dancing Maſter in *Silver-ſtreet*, and how do you think it happen'd, I'll tell you Word for Word as I had it from her Maid Mrs. *Tightly*, who by the bye is a notable Wench, and has feather'd her Neſt in the Widow's Service pretty handſomely; but let that paſs, ſhe deſerves all ſhe has got I'm ſure.

The Widow came up to Town, you know, laſt Winter about a Law-Suit with her Son's Guardian, and I believe was wearied of lying alone, which I cannot blame her for, for indeed a lone Woman is expoſed to Slights, and Rubs, and Checks, in this World, but no Body offer'd; for to ſay the Truth, ſhe was none of the handſomeſt, (a little more Sugar if you pleaſe Miſs, this is moſt excellent Tea) but as I was ſaying,

Nobody

Nobody offer'd for a long Time, her Day was not come. It happned that a Silver Spoon was miſſing, and after that another, and then a Silver Thimble was loſt, in ſhort, nothing could be laid out of one's Hands but it was preſently gone, and yet every Body about her were honeſt as the Day, and Nobody could think on whom to fix the Theft, unleſs it was on the Kitchen-Maid, who was turn'd away barely on Suſpicion, tho' as it appeared afterwards ſhe was much wrong'd. This paſs'd on for a Month, and no Tidings of any of the loſt Goods, when a Diamond Ring worth above twenty Guineas vaniſh'd all of a ſudden, and no more to be heard of than the reſt. This Loſs fretted Mrs. *Wouldhaveit* the Widow, more than all the reſt, twenty Pounds you know Mrs. *Weller* is a great deal of Money, and too much to loſe of all Conſcience; ſhe vex'd and fum'd, but all was to no Purpoſe, all her Anxiety could not recall the Ring again.

Mrs. *Tightly* her Woman on ſeeing ſo many Things loſt in ſo odd a manner, began to be uneaſy leſt her Miſtreſs ſhould ſuſpect her, and was reſolv'd to find out the Thief if ſhe went to the Devil for Council; by great Good Fortune, in the midſt

of her Troubles about the Ring, ſhe heard of the famous Mrs *Barnet*, and without Loſs of Time, went that ſame Afternoon to conſult her. And would you believe it poſſible, Mrs. *Weller*, as I hope to be ſaved, the Moment ſhe ſaw her ſhe told her Errand as pat as if ſhe had been in the Secret, and that ſhe came to enquire about ſuch and ſuch loſt Things. Poor Mrs. *Tightly* was frighten'd out of her Wits, and was afraid ſhe was really ſpeaking to the Devil, as ſhe had often threatned in her Paſſion to do; but at laſt plucking up a Spirit, and bleſſing herſelf, told her, you have indeed, Miſtreſs, gueſs'd my Errand here, I wiſh you could tell me as eaſily where theſe Things are. — Not ſo faſt good Woman, Things once loſt are not ſo eaſily found. The other thinking ſhe boggled about her Fee, preſented her with half a Crown, but ſhe refus'd it; no, no, ſaid ſhe, I did not doubt your Pay, but its my Way never to make Diſcoveries of that Kind but to the Owner in Perſon: if your Miſtreſs comes, I may perhaps tell her; but for your Silver Thimble, the laced Mob, and the Pink-couloured Stockings you loſt, you'll find them in one of your old Pockets ſtuff'd behind your Trunk in the Garret.

Mrs. *Tightly* run home as if twenty Devils had been driving her, and goes immediately to the Garret, where, as ſure as you live, ſhe found the Things juſt as Mrs. *Barnet* had ſaid. If ſhe had a good Opinion of her before, you need not doubt but ſhe believ'd ſhe could do any thing, and away down Stairs ſhe went to her Lady, told her all that had happened, and begged of her to go to the Cunning Woman, for ſure as a Gun, ſhe would tell her where her Ring was.

It was next Day before Mrs. *Tightly* could perſuade her Miſtreſs to go; at laſt ſhe was prevailed on, and they took a Hackney Coach and drove to the *Old Baily*, where Mrs. *Barnet* lived: But I ſhould have told you the Widow diſguis'd herſelf, and went only as an Acquaintance of her Maids, and not as the Miſtreſs; but thank ye, theſe Tricks would not paſs upon Mrs. *Barnet*, ſhe knew her immediately, and to make ſhort on't, told her the Spoons were in ſuch a Place, I forgot where now, but there they were found, and that the Ring would not be found for a Week or ſo, and then would be pick'd up on the Weſt Side of the Houſe when nobody was thinking of it.

But this was not the material Affair, ſhe told the Widow ſhe would ſoon alter her Condition, and that ſhe would be ſhortly married to a tall, thin, black viſaged handſome Gentleman, whom ſhe had never yet ſeen, and that ſhe would meet him by Accident ſome where near *Moorfields*.

Mrs. *Wouldhaveit* did not mind her much at that Time, but gave her ſome Money nd went Home, where, as I told you, the Spoons were found in the preciſe Place ſhe had directed them to. This made her look a little ſharp, and gave her Hopes, that there might be ſomething in what ſhe had been told about her Marriage, and ſhe made not the leaſt Doubt about her finding her Ring again (indeed Miſs you muſt excuſe me, I can drink no more, I have drank four or five Diſhes, but if you pleaſe, I'll take a little of your Mamma's Cherry Brandy, I think I find myſelf grip'd or ſo; you ſee I make free, but you may do the ſame with me) as I was ſaying ſhe was in no Doubt about her Ring, but waited patiently the Time ſet by Mrs. *Barnet*, and ſhe was not deceived; for that very Day Week Mrs. *Tightly* was cleaning out the Buffet, and what ſhould ſhe find under a Silver Poſſet-Diſh, but the very Ring, and what is more remarkable

remarkable, this Buffet ſtood on the Weſt Side of the Dining-Room.

Mrs. *Tightly* leap'd for Joy, and ran with it to her Miſtreſs, who was now convinc'd that the Woman dealt with no leſs than the Devil, and reckon'd upon the Husband ſhe had foretold, as ſure as if ſhe had him between a Pair of Sheets, which ſhe ſoon had, —— for, her Maid and ſhe being in her own Coach ſome where in the City to pay a Viſit to a Lady whom they did not find at Home; Mrs. *Tightly* put it into her Head by pure Accident to go that Day to *Bethlem* Hoſpital, where Mrs. *Wouldhaveit* had a diſtant Relation confined for Lunacy.

The Widow went without any Thought of what was to happen, and was walking in the Hall looking at the miſerable Objects in the Cells, when a tall, handſome, black-viſag'd Gentleman, who chanc'd to be there, I ſuppoſe out of Curioſity, join'd Company and conducted the Widow from Place to Place, and ſhew'd her all that was to be ſeen, and behaved with great Complaiſance and Politeneſs; and when they were tired with looking at the diſmal Spectacles in that Place, he handed her to her Coach with as much

Reſpect as if ſhe had been a Ducheſs, which pleas'd her mightily; for they ſay ſhe lov'd to be treated with great Dignity. But as he was handing her in, he ſaw his Footman and ordered him to deſire the Coachman to turn the Chariot, the Fellow told him, that one of his Horſes had fallen down dead, and that the Coachman had gone home to his Honour's Stables to fetch another. This ſounded well to the Widow, as it let her know ſhe had to deal with ſomebody. No matter ſays the Gentleman, I can't ſtay till he returns, call me a Chair or a Hackney Coach, and was making a Bow to leave her, but ſhe could do no leſs to a Gentleman of his Rank, who had behaved ſo civilly, than offer to ſet him down if his Way lay towards the other End of the Town. He told her it did, and accepted of her Invitation with very little Ceremony, what would you have more; but this Civility made room for a Viſit from the Gentleman at her own Houſe. That begat an Intimacy, an Intimacy begat Love, and that begat Matrimony, which may or may not beget Sons and Daughters. The Widow that was, is as young as I am, and I ſhould not deſpair on ſuch an Occaſion. So you ſee how true every Thing came to paſs as Mrs. *Barnet* foretold. But reply'd Mrs. *Weller*, I thought you

ſaid

ſaid the Widow was married to Mr. what do you call him, the Dancing Maſter in *Silver-ſtreet*, this ſeems by the Tale to be quite another Man. Oh no, its the ſame Man, for as to that Part of it the Widow is bit; however, if ſhe has not a great Gentleman, with a great Eſtate and a Coach, ſhe has a healthy young Fellow and that is what ſhe moſt wanted I ſuppoſe. But what would you think Mrs. *Weller*, continued the talkative Widow, if we ſhould for a little Bit of Diverſion go altogether to this ſame Mrs. *Barnet*, and paſs the Evening there: Oh la, do Mother, added ſimple *Poll*, it will be pure Sport, Miſs *Sally* here and I will have our Fortunes read for Nothing; for ſure you will treat us two young Folks. Yes, yes, Child we will, come go and get ready, and ſend the Maid for a Coach. Miſs *Dickens* made ſome Scruple about going, but the Itch for Fortune-telling ſo natural to young Women of more Experience than we can ſuppoſe her to have, and the Perſuaſions of the reſt of the Company got the better of all her Shyneſs, and away they all went to the wiſe Mrs. *Barnet*'s.

This Oracle was a little ſhy of Acceſs, but half a Crown tip'd the Footman, for ſhe kept her Equipage, by the Widow pro-

cured them at laſt Admittance, and ſhe favoured their Appearance ſo much, that ſhe heard their Caſe before that of half a dozen of Servant Maids, who had been waiting two or three Hours, ſome for Sweet-Hearts, and others for ſtray Spoons, *&c.*

Tho' the chattering Widow would have claim'd the Preference of the reſt of her Company, and wanted to have her Curioſity firſt ſatisfied, yet this Female Sage, ſaw ſomething in Miſs *Dickens*'s Phyſiognomy which attracted her Attention, and made her Deaf to every Thing elſe till ſhe had caſt a Figure for the fair Waiting-Maid. The unmeaning Scrol was no ſooner drawn, than the Prieſteſs cry'd out in a loud Rapture, good Fortune, Madam, nothing but the moſt charming Fortune I ever ſaw in my Life; not ſo much as a Croſs, all is uninterrupted Proſperity, and great Grandeur. You are but lately come to Town, you came in the Stage, but let me tell you, you'll go out of it in your own Coach. Bleſs me, cry'd the Widow, did not I tell you ſhe would ſurprize you, but go on, Madam, let us hear the reſt of it. Why Miſs, continued the Oracle, you are not mad ſure to think of Service (Oh la ſays *Poll* ſure ſhe is the Devil) but its all one whether you do or not,

not, you'll hire Servants before you are hired, and in a little Time live as grand as the Lady you thought to ſerve, take my Word for it, nothing can prevent it. (But you ſay nothing about a Husband, ſays Mrs. *Weller*, come let us hear that) —— a Huſband, yes ſhe may have Twenty! there are two or three quarreling about her, but only one of them will have her, he is a genteel, handſome young Man, of a middle ſize, a fair Complexion, and a King *William*'s Noſe, and walks very erect and with a grand Air. I gueſs he muſt belong to the Army, do you know ſuch a Man Miſs? Miſs was mute. Yes ſhe does, cries *Poll*, ſure I wiſh I was out of the Room, for nothing but the Devil could tell her all this. Its the Captain to a Hair's Breadth, but how long will it be before it is a Match, I hope to have a Pair of Gloves, —— in a very ſhort Time reply'd Mrs. *Barnet*, ſhe will ſee the Gentleman within theſe eight and forty Hours, and may go to Bed when ſhe pleaſes. Piſh cry'd Miſs this is all a Joke, pray ſpeak to ſomebody elſe, you have told me enough, I ſhall be ſatisfied with one tenth Part of the good Fortune you have foretold, and then threw her ha'f a Piece.

The Oracle pleas'd with her Generoſity would have drain'd all the Influence in the Stars to ſerve her, but the Widow grew impatient to come in while the Stars ſeemed in good Humour, ſhe was furniſhed with a young rich Huſband, and half a dozen Children. —— *Poll* with a few early Croſſes, but a ſpruce Mercer, Children, and Proſperity in the End. —— Mrs. *Weller* had for her Share a Legacy from the North, and a Preſent to come from the Lord knows where in leſs than a Month, and a Letter next Day with ſome very good News, but the Conſtellations had never a Huſband to ſpare at that Time. However every one was for the preſent contented with their Lot, and the Oracle with her Fees; ſo all parted good Friends, and the Recital of their Predictions, and rejoicing for their Hopes ſerved them for Converſation for that Night till they went to Bed, where I leave them to dream of what is never to come to paſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Containing Oracles delivered from the myſtical Characters in a Coffee Cup by Mrs. Clearſight, *a famous Profeſſor of that Art.*

NEXT Morning they were all ſo full of Fortune-telling, that Miſs was call'd down to Breakfaſt in the Parlour, to have a little more Chat about it, and ſhe had not been in the Room ten Minutes when a Penny-Poſt Letter came directed for Mrs. *Weller*; ſhe read it, and cry'd out good God, what ſhall I think of this! As I live, Mrs. *Barnet* ſhould be burnt for a Witch. Look ye here Miſs, as ſhe told me Yeſterday, I have got a Letter with very good News, its from my Attorney in *Clifford*'s Inn, telling me he has got Security for the Money due to me by Mr. *Sharp*, which is good News indeed, for tho' my Bill for Lodging and other Things amounts to forty-two Pounds ſixteen Shillings and ſeven Pence, I would have given it all for the odd ſeven Pence. Well they may ſay what they will, but theſe People know more than they ought to do. What think you now of your Huſband,

Huſband, Miſs *Sally*, ſays ſly *Poll*, well I ſee I ſhall have the Gloves, I'll have them from the Captain whether you giv them me or not. Poh, poh, my dear, don't be ſo fooliſh reply'd Miſs *Dickens*. Its time enough for you and I to think of a Huſband, when we have got ſomething to give them, hang the Captain I wiſh you had him; don't plague me with him; but if we are to have any Tea let us have it, or I'll go up Stairs again.

But the Converſation was not ſo ſoon ſtop'd, it ſtill ran upon the Captain and Mrs. *Barnet*'s Prediction, till the Maid came in and acquainted her Miſtreſs that Mrs. *Clearſight* was come to wait of her if ſhe was pleaſed to be at Leiſure. —— Oh by all means let her come in, ods ſo, I have not heard of her theſe ſeven Years, not ſince Miſs *Oſborn* lodg'd here, why ſhe is one of the moſt famous Coffee Readers in *England*, I aſſure you ſhe is not a common one that goes about to every Body: No, no, ſhe only reads to her intimate Acquaintance, or Perſons of Quality, who give her a Preſent in a genteel manner, not by way of Pay. We ſhall ſee if ſhe and Mrs. *Barnet* agree in their Predictions. The Maid went out, and introduced the new Oracle, who after

a

a great deal of half-bred Ceremony took her Seat.

It was not long before the Converſation turned upon the Profeſſion of Coffee-reading, Coffee was called for, and ſhe condeſcended, tho' the Perſons preſent were not of the firſt Quality to give them a Specimen of her Art. As Miſs *Dickens* was the Stranger, ſhe toſſed her Cup firſt, and this modern *Cybele* took it from her fair Hands, and began to explain the myſtic Characters.

Dear Miſs, I profeſs you ſurprize me, I thought you had been bred and born in this City; your Diſcourſe and Behaviour could inform me of nothing elſe, but I find I am miſtaken, for I ſee you are lately come off a Journey, from a great Houſe like a Caſtle and a great many Trees about it, which you ſeem to leave with Reluctance as if it had been your Home. See how plainly you are looking back at it with a wiſhful Eye. But you need not regret leaving it, there is a fine Plain before you which is a ſure Token of Proſperity; ſee it (pointing with a Pin) it reaches all round the Cup, and yet you go on with a Kind of Reluctance, as if you deſigned to go ſome other Road. I fancy Miſs, you have ſomething in your Head at preſent

preſent which will not ſucceed, but then the Diſappointment is better than if every thing had happened as you could wiſh; it is a Diſappointment of Proſperity, and not of Adverſity; but if you pleaſe to toſs another, I hope I ſhall ſee more; the firſt only gives us a general Hint, the ſecond is more particular, and the third explains the whole.

The ſecond Cup was toſſed, and the knowing Conjureſs thus went on. I beg Pardon, Madam, I hope I give no Offence, I ſpeak only what I ſee here; I ſee you offering yourſelf as it were in Service to an old Lady of a very comely Aſpect, who puſhes you away. Good Lord preſerve me, cried Mrs. *Weller*, how they jump, but go on, I beg Pardon for interrupting you; ſhe is not to get this Service you ſay. I think I may venture to aſſure Miſs that ſhe will not, nor need ſhe repent it, for here I ſee a fair handſome young Gentleman in a Scarlet Coat and Feather in his Hat, taking her by the Hand, and putting a Ring upon her Finger, which ſhe ſeems to refuſe; but it is in vain, for here in another Place is ſhe and the ſame young Gentleman; he has ſome Place under the King, for here is the Crown over his Head. Ay, ay, he has, we know him well enough, cried *Poll*; but what are they

they doing? there they are before the Parſon and a great Crowd about them of Footmen with Coaches and great Attendance; indeed it is the fineſt Cup I ever ſaw. *Poll* clapped her Hands and could not help embracing Miſs *Dickens*; odſo, how lucky it is that we ſhall have a fine Wedding, I hope you'll take me for your Waiting-Maid. What with the Impertinence of *Poll*, and the ſeeming ſtrange Concurrence of the two Oracles in their Predictions about the Captain, which could not fail, when mingling with the ſtill dear Idea of Sir *Thomas*, but put her Spirits in a kind of Flutter, ſhe began to grow wearied of the Converſation, took the Cup from the Reader, and would not be prevailed on to toſs another; which obliged the Operator to take up thoſe of Mrs. *Weller* and her Daughter, which lay ready for her, out of which ſhe had the Sagacity to confirm all that Mrs. *Barnet* had ſaid the Evening before, with this Difference only, that the Planets ſeemed to be a little more auſpicious to good Mrs. *Weller*, by intimating the Poſſibility of her taſting once more the Pleaſures of Wedlock, which muſt have been a great Comfort to the good Woman's Heart; for ſure no old Woman can be ſo entirely curs'd as when deprived of all Hopes of the conjugal Rites. All other

Hopes

Hopes may vaniſh, every other Pleaſure maygrow inſipid, even Goſſipingand Scandal may grow nauſeous, but while a Thorn can draw Blood out of her ſapleſs Skin, ſhe entertains ſome faint Remembrance of paſt Enjoyment, and ſome ſmall Hopes that ſhe may ſtill act her Part in an amorous Combat. In ſhort, all this little Company were perfectly pleaſed with the ſage Oracles of the ſagacious Miſtreſs *Clearſight*, except Miſs *Dickens*, who thought the Predictions about the Captain began to wear too ſerious an Aſpect, and that her Hopes of getting into Mrs. *Davis*'s Service were a little leſs ſanguine than they had been for ſome Days paſt; for Miſs, as bred in the Country, was not without a ſmall Share of Faith in Divination, and could not help, on this Occaſion, believing there muſt be ſomething ſupernatural in the Caſe, when two Perſons entirely Strangers to her, and one another, that is, for aught ſhe knew to the contrary, ſhould hit upon Things ſo exactly alike. It is true the Predictions were in the main very good, and promis'd a large Share of Riches and Grandeur, and a Husband whoſe Perſon, Behaviour and Eſtate were by no means deſpicable, and might have afforded great Satisfaction to a Mind ſet intirely upon Wealth, and free from all other Engage-

ments,

ments, and I make no Doubt but half my pretty female Readers would think themſelves very well off with the handſome young Captain, or ſuch another, and may think my Pariſh Girl impertinently ſqueamiſh, for being uneaſy at the Thoughts that this young Soldier was predeſtinated to be her Huſband. What would the Fool be at, ſays Miſs *Snatch-at-it?* What the Devil! won't a handſome young Fellow with two or three Thouſands a Year go down with her? and will ſhe be ſo ſtark ſtaring mad, as to prefer Mrs. *Davis*'s Service to ſuch an Offer, hang her for a mean-ſpirited Slut, I would marry a Corporal rather than ſerve a Ducheſs; but what can one expect of a Pariſh Girl? However, I hope for all her Shyneſs ſhe'll marry him, ſhe cannot do better.——That is as you think, good Miſs *Snatch-at-it*; if he is ordained for her, why ſhe muſt have him, there's no help for it, but at preſent her Uneaſineſs is very rational; remember ſhe had all her Lifetime a warm Eſteem for a *Welſh* Baronet, which ſince his Declaration, has grown up to ſomething very like a confirmed Affection, and conſider that ſhe was informed of all the Baronet ſaid and did at Mr. *Worthy*'s, and then you muſt allow that it was no Wonder ſhe found herſelf alarmed, when

all

all Hopes of her indulging that Flame began to diſappear, by the powerful Conviction of an oraculous Prophecy, confirmed by many very odd Circumſtances.——— Well, well, we ſuppoſe her reaſonably uneaſy, and as peeviſh on the firſt Thoughts of it as you pleaſe, ſays Mrs. *Impatient*, pray go on and tell us what followed upon all this. Why ſhe went up to her Chamber, threw herſelf on the Bed, and ſo put an End to the Chapter.

CHAP. V.

Containing Miſs Summers's *Eſcape from Captain* Price.

MISS *Summers* was ſo uneaſy with the Thoughts of the Predictions that had been made to her, that ſhe refuſed coming down to Dinner, and almoſt fretted herſelf into a Fever, before Noon. But towards Evening ſhe reſolved to go and wait of Mrs. *Davis*, ſince it was within a Day or two of the Time limited by her Letter, and by that Means eaſe her Doubts in that Reſpect which ſeem'd to preſs her the moſt, becauſe that did not depend upon herſelf, but on the Will of another; whereas ſhe comforted herſelf that fulfilling the Oracle in

Regard

Regard to the Captain was entirely in her own Power, that is as much as a poor weak Woman can reſiſt the Influence of the Stars, and the ſoft Perſuaſions of a handſome young Fellow.

She dreſſed herſelf as much in Character as poſſible, left in her Chamber as much of Miſs *Summers* as ſhe poſſibly could, and took a Hackney Coach for Mrs. *Davis*'s, flattering herſelf ſhe ſhould meet with a favourable Reception on the Score of her Letter from her Friend Mrs. *Worthy*; but the Devil and his Oracles happened to be pretty near right for this once; for Miſs *Dickens* was acquainted by an old Woman left in Charge of Mrs. *Davis*'s Houſe, that the Lady and all her Family were gone to *Aix la Chapelle* with a Niece of hers, who was in a bad State of Health, who was ordered by the Phyſicians to drink the Waters for her Recovery, and that Mrs. *Brown* and her new married Huſband had gone along with her.

The unfortunate Miſs *Dickens* needed no more Information to aſſure her that ſhe had loſt all Hopes of this Service, which would not have vexed her ſo much, as another might be got by the ſame Intereſt, if it had not

not put the Fortune-teller's Authority beyond all reaſonable Doubt. It was impoſſible to be ſuch an Unbeliever, after ſuch a glaring Inſtance of their Preſcience, as to doubt the literal fullfilling all the reſt of the Prophecy. She was ſcarce able to ſupport the Shock, or to get back to the Coach without Aſſiſtance, and when ſhe came home, her Landlady and *Poll*, whom ſhe had told where ſhe was going, met her to learn the News; but ſhe had no Occaſion to ſpeak to inform them; they ſaw it in her Eyes which were brim full of Tears, and her Face covered with a deadly Melancholy. Alaſs, my Dear Miſs cries the officious Landlady, what is the Matter, are not you well my Dear, you look ſadly, come into the Parlour and reſt your ſelf. Bleſs me *Polly*, ſhe is ready to faint, pray fetch the Hartſhorn Drops? Lord, how you gape and ſtare! what do you ſtand for? you'll find them on the Shelf in my Cloſet, by the Side of the Uſquebaugh Bottle, do run, that's a good Girl, put a little Water into that Tea cup,—Not that, Fool, it had Gin in it, and Miſs don't like the Smell of it.—Drink it up, Miſs, it is only fair Water, and ſome Hartſhorn-Drops,—I hope you are a little recovered. Yes, I am, replied the diſconſolate Fair, I thank you, Mrs. *Weller*, for your Civility, but I

wiſh

wiſh I were dead. Lord forbid, ſays the other, what has happened ſince you went out? has Mrs. *Davis* given you a Refuſal? ——No, no, but it is as bad, ſhe is gone to *Aix la Chapelle* and carried her old Waiting-Maid with her.——Come, ſays Mrs. *Weller*, let not that diſhearten you, if you muſt have a Service, I warrant we find as good, but my Life for it you will have other Thoughts very ſoon. Pray remember the Fortune-tellers, they have ſpoke true in every thing hitherto. Let us hope for the beſt in all that is to come, for my Share, I have no more Doubt of it than I have that to-morrow will come; pray don't look ſo grave, it is better ſure to be a Captain's Lady than a Lady's Woman in any Family in *Chriſtendom*. For God's Sake, replied Miſs *Dickens*, don't teaze one ſo with ſuch Nonſenſe, I have enough to vex me, without being plagued with Chimera's, that have no Foundation in Nature. They ſaw ſhe was uneaſy with her Diſapointment, and dropped the Diſcourſe for that Time, and ſhe went ſoon after up to her Room, it being Poſt Night, and wrote a Letter to the friendly Mrs. *Worthy*, acquainting her with the Diſappointment, and begging her Advice how to make Intereſt for ſome other Family.

The

The next Day her Melancholy continued, which Mrs. *Weller* and her Daughter endeavoured to diſſipate, by dinging her Ears with the Captain; and when that had not the deſired Effect, they found Means to bring the Captain himſelf to rouze up her Spirits. He came into the Parlour a little after Dinner, where ſhe was, for ſhe dieted in the Family, as knowing no other Way to diſpoſe of herſelf, and he had not been ſat down two or three Minutes, and paid her the uſual Compliments, than firſt Mrs. *Weller*, and then her Daughter quitted the Room, on ſome frivolous Pretence, and left the Captain and Miſs alone.

The young Officer was ſilent for a Minute or two, then looking earneſtly, but very reſpectfully at her. I'm ſorry, Miſs, ſays he, to ſee you ſo melancholy To-day, ſomething ſeems to lay heavy upon your Spirits, I ſhould be ſorry to think any thing ſhould give you Uneaſineſs, and ſhould be glad to do any Thing in my Power to reſtore you to that ſprightly Humour you ſo agreeably entertained us with ſince you came here, I hope you have met with nothing in the Family to fret you. By no means, Sir, replied Miſs, but one cannot always be in the ſame

ſame Temper, and you only fancy I am dull. No, no, its no Fancy my dear Miſs. Theſe charming Eyes have loſt much of their Vivacity, and an Air of Sadneſs hangs on all your Countenance, in ſpite of your Inclinations to diſguiſe it. Be not diſpleaſed my charming Girl, that I intereſt myſelf in your Welfare, and give me leave to aſſure you that I cannot be at eaſe till you are once more that gay, enchanting Creature you was but a Day or two ago. I have partly learned what chagrines you, it is the Diſappointment of the Place you expected; but let not that diſturb you, my Charmer, you are cut out for ſomething elſe than Servitude; no, that Form, that Face, thoſe Hands, endeavouring to lay hold of one of them, which ſhe haſtily pulled from him, were not cut out for much Drudgery; you are more capable of giving exquiſite Bliſs to the Man you love, and muſt not think of ſlaviſh Dependance. You may command my Fortune, its at your Service, and as Earneſt accept this Purſe, it may be of Uſe to you till I can provide for you ſuitably, only in return, give me leave to adore you.

The firſt Part of the young Officer's Speech gave her ſome Pain, yet ſhe bore it pretty patiently, but the laſt of it, when he offered

her the Purſe, ſet her all in a Flame, her Pride reſented the Indignity, and made her Virtue take the Alarm, as that was a Mode of Courtſhip, as ſhe imagined, very improper to introduce an honourable Propoſal. She took up the Purſe which he had thrown in her Lap, with an Air of the utmoſt Indignation and Contempt, and threw it at him, at the ſame time giving him ſuch a Look as ſufficiently prepared him for the Sequel. Take, Sir, your Money, and beſtow it and your impertinent Gallantry where it is acceptable. Whatever you may think of me at preſent, I am far above receiving an Indignity from you, and ſtarted from her Chair, and was puſhing by him out of the Room. He caught her in his Arms, endeavouring to ſnatch a Kiſs from her; You muſt not leave me in a Paſſion, my charming Angel, by Heaven I did not mean to affront you, I would ſooner die than give you the leaſt Cauſe of Offence; tell me how I ſhall appeaſe the Anger I ſee in thoſe lovely Eyes. Unhand me, Sir, ſtruggling from him, and keep your Diſtance, if you have any thing of the Gentleman; I cannot, muſt not be uſed with ſuch ſaucy Freedom. She gave a Spring from his Arms, quitted the Parlour and went up to her own Chamber in a mighty

Paſſion

Paſſion at the indecent Freedom ſhe thought he had taken with her.

Here the Fortune-tellers Predictions occurred to her Memory, which made her reflect calmly upon what Judgment ſhe ſhould form on his Behaviour. It was ſome time before ſhe could recollect that ſhe was not now Miſs *Summers*, that is, did not appear as ſuch, but as Miſs *Dickens*, a Dependant for a Place, and when ſhe calmly view'd herſelf in that Light, and compared it with the Captain's Behaviour, ſhe could not think he had acted much out of Character, for tho' he offered her a Purſe which might be proper enough for a young Woman in her Condition, yet he had not dropped one rude Expreſſion, at leaſt, what he ſaid was ſo conceived as that it might be explained either into an honourable Deſign, or the contrary. This Thought calmed her Temper a little, and abated her Reſentment againſt her new Adorer. But to theſe another Train of Thoughts ſucceeded. What is it to me, whether he has any ſerious Deſigns upon me or not? I cannot love him; no, no, the dear Remembrance of that raſh Man, whoſe Paſſion has expos'd me to all theſe Dangers, fill my Heart too much to leave Room for any Thoughts of another. Yet my Hopes

of him are vain; my Word is paſſed never to encourage him; my Duty and Virtue direct me to keep that Promiſe ſacred: Then why ſhould I not indulge a reaſonable Propoſal from another? Should the Captain have any ſuch Deſigns, the World would think me mad to refuſe him; I can adviſe with none, but ſuch as would condemn me for heſitating to accept of ſuch an Offer. But ſtill I cannot love him; ſhall I give my Hand where I cannot give my Heart? Shall I make myſelf wretched to pleaſe the Publick, or for the Sake of taſteleſs Grandeur? No, that would be only legal Proſtitution. In ſhort, debating with herſelf the prudential Part of refuſing or accepting the Captain's Offer, and her Struggles on the ſcore of Sir *Thomas*, employed her Thoughts all the Remainder of that Evening, and almoſt till next Morning; when at laſt ſhe determined with herſelf to reject all Overtures of any Sort that ſhould come from the Captain, and to keep herſelf upon her Guard againſt all Deſigns he might have upon her Honour, and endeavoured to juſtify to herſelf the Prudence of this Reſolution on the ſcore of a kind of Promiſe ſhe had made to Sir *Thomas*, to encourage the Addreſſes of no other Perſon; for ſhe concluded that her Promiſe to him was

as

as binding as that made to Lady *Bountiful*. Oh Pox upon her for a Fool, a Bird in Hand is worth two in the Buſh, ſhe ſhould have taken him at any Rate, ſays gray-hair'd Mrs. *Sit-her-time*, ſhe'll never get ſuch another Match, —— but plague on the Author, what a Pother he has kept about Captain *Price*, and after all, it has come to nothing, but that the fooliſh Wench has refus'd him; let us have done with him, and call another Subject, ſure ſhe marries ſomebody at laſt. —— Not ſo faſt, Madam, if you pleaſe, you muſt be better acquainted with the Captain before you and I part, and perhaps I may recommend him to you when I have done with him, for I cannot for my Life perſuade my Pariſh Girl to take up with him.

She grew ſo afraid of his Deſigns, that ſhe never afforded him another Opportunity to explain himſelf for two whole Days, and would not lie alone at Night. With very little Entreaty ſhe perſuaded *Polly*, whom ſhe believ'd to be an innocent, harmleſs, well-meaning Girl, to be her Bed-fellow for the Remainder of the Time ſhe deſign'd to ſtay in the Houſe, which ſhe

reſolv'd within herſelf ſhould not be longer than Neceſſity oblig'd her.

The third Night after *Polly* became her Bedfellow, they undreſs'd as uſual, and both went to Bed, and lay ſome Minutes chatting of indifferent Things, when *Poll*, all of a ſudden, ſaid, oh la, I forgot to pull down the Window in the back Room, it rains hard, and the Rain will beat in upon the Floor and ſpoil the Carpet; I muſt get up and ſhut it, I wiſh you had not put out the Candle, but I ſhall find my way in the Dark. Miſs would have perſuaded her to lie ſtill, but the Girl was obſtinate, got up and went out of the Room, ſhut the Window, and, as Miſs thought, return'd immediately. But ſhe was ſurpriz'd ſhe did not ſpeak, and that when ſhe lay down ſhe breath'd quicker than uſual, and ſeem'd all of a Tremble. — God bleſs me *Polly* what is the Matter, are you well, or are you frighted at any thing, you ſhake like an Aſpin Leaf. As the other made no Reply, ſhe very tenderly put her Hand over her, and drew nearer her; pray ſpeak and tell me what is the Matter with you, I'll get up and call your Mamma if you are not well, no ſaid the other in a low Whiſper, I ſhall be well preſently, and threw her Arms

Arms about her, embracing her with a Warmth not common between Perſons of the ſame Sex, and preſſed her ſo hard ſo that ſhe cried out for God's Sake, *Polly*, give over, you ſtifle me. However, ſhe did not deſiſt, but continued to embrace her ſo eagerly that Miſs thought the Wench was poſſeſſed; ſhe endeavoured to get looſe from her, and in the Struggle began to be ſenſible that *Polly* had undergone a Metamorphoſis of an extraordinary Nature, ſince ſhe left the Room.

Heavens guard me, cried the incenſed Fair, and ſhrieked as loud as ſhe was able, and ſtruggled with all her Strength to diſengage herſelf, but her Bedfellow endeavour'd to ſtifle her with Cries and Kiſſes, now and then whiſpering, be eaſy, by Heaven I mean you no Harm. She gueſſed now whom ſhe had to deal with, and would not truſt to his Imprecations, eſpecially as he proceeded to Liberties which gave the Lie to his Oaths. She went on bawling out Murder, and at laſt, by Accident, giving him a Blow with her Elbow on the pit of the Stomach, he let go his Hold; ſhe jumped out of Bed, ran to the Window, which had no Shutter, threw up the Saſh, and cried out Murder, with great Vehemence. The Captain, for

it was no other, ran to pull her from the Window, but ſhe held faſt by it, and bawled ſo loud that the Watch at laſt thundered at the Door to get Admittance. He then let her go and ran to his own Chamber, and ſhe called to the Watch to break open the Door, or elſe ſhe ſhould be undone. But the People in the Houſe were in no Diſpoſition to open it; the treacherous *Polly* came running into the Room in her Shift with a Light, and begged of her to call to the Watch to give over alarming the Neighbourhood who were all at their Windows, ſome crying, what is the Matter, others crying break open the Door, there is certainly Miſchief in the Houſe, the old Bawd is at her old Tricks, ruining ſome young Creature; but Miſs would not be perſuaded to come from the Window, but wrapping the Window-Curtain about her, ſtood crying out to the Watch to force the Door open. By this Time one of the Watchmen had brought the Conſtable of the Night, who gave Orders to break open the Door, which the Bawd within underſtanding by the Noiſe they made, ſhe thought proper at laſt to peep her Head out of the one Pair of Stairs, and beg them to deſiſt and ſhe would come down and let them in.

When

When the Door was open, a great Crowd ruſhed in; amongſt the reſt, an elderly Woman who kept a Houſe over againſt them, and had not been in Bed, but heard Miſs's Shrieks from the Beginning. The Conſtable laid hold of the Bawd, Mrs. *Weller*, and delivered her over to the Watch, telling her I have once more got your Ladyſhip into my Power, I hope you'll not come off ſo eaſily as you did the laſt Time I had the Favour of your Company, and he and the reſt of his Poſſey went up to the two Pair of Stairs, from whence they had heard the Noiſe, when they found Miſs all over in a Tremble juſt as ſhe had ſlipt on a Gown, on her hearing they had got Admittance. The Conſtable aſked her what had been the Matter; ſhe told him in as modeſt Terms as ſhe could, the Trick *Polly* had put upon her, and the Attempt the Captain had made. Alaſs! Miſs, ſays Mrs. *Maſſy*, the elderly Woman I juſt mentioned, I have obſerved you ever ſince you came here, and was heartily ſorry to ſee a young Creature of your modeſt Appearance in ſuch Hands; I frequently wanted an Opportunity to ſpeak to you, and let you know your Danger; but the baſe Woman and her Daughter watched you ſo cloſe there was no coming at

you; but it is well you have eſcaped ſo, many a young Creature has been undone in this curſed Houſe; it is a Shame the Magiſtrates ſhould allow ſuch a Neſt of Wickedneſs, but I hope they will now meet with their juſt Reward. Come, put on your Clothes and go along with me for this Night, and the Conſtable will find Lodgings for the reſt of the Family. That I ſhall, ſays the dark Magiſtrate, but where is the Captain, as the Gentlewoman calls him? he muſt along too, to keep his Procureſs Company, and the young Imp her Daughter. They went to ſearch the Houſe, but he had found Means to get out at the back Door before the Watch got in, and *Polly*, ſo ſoon as ſhe heard the Door open, ſlipped out of Miſs's Room, and probably got out the ſame Way, ſo that they had only the Bawd and her Maid, whom they carried to the Round-Houſe.

Mrs. *Weller*, before ſhe was carried off, begged to ſpeak to Miſs, ſhe fell on her Knees and beſeeched her not to expoſe her, proteſting that ſhe knew nothing of the Deſign the Captain and *Polly* had formed againſt her; for alaſs, ſaid ſhe, the looſe Man has ruined my Child, and by that Means prevailed on her to do what he pleaſed.

pleaſed. She cried and lamented in ſo piteous a Manner that Miſs, who was all good Nature, relented, and would have perſuaded the Conſtable to let her go, but the Conſtable ſpirited up by Mrs. *Maſſey*, who owed her Neighbour this good Office, was inexorable. Miſs was obliged to ſubmit againſt her Will; and having packed up her few Things in her Portmanteau, had them carried over to Mrs. *Maſſey*'s, where ſhe was furniſhed with a very good Room.

When left alone from the officious Kindneſs of her new Landlady, ſhe thanked Providence for her ſignal Delivery, but could not help lamenting her ſad Fate that expoſed her to ſo many unforeſeen Dangers; and now more than ever regretted the Diſappointment of Mrs. *Davis*'s Service, where ſhe might be protected from all ſuch Inſults; for ſhe plainly foreſaw that without the Protection of ſome Perſon of real Worth and Virtue, her Youth and Perſon would expoſe her to daily, and perhaps unavoidable Misfortunes. She now blamed Mrs. *Morrice*, to whom ſhe had formerly communicated her Suſpicions for not giving greater Attention to them, but hoped now ſhe would be convinced and give her proper Advice how to behave, as ſhe had none elſe on whom

ſhe could depend. She was diſturbed, and in ſuch a Flurry of Spirits that ſhe reſted none all Night, and wiſhed for Morning that ſhe might go to Mrs. *Morrice* to inform her of the Inſult offered her. But when ſhe got up pretty early and was dreſſed in Order to go out, Mrs. *Maſſey* came into her Room and perſuaded her not to go out, but to ſend for Mrs. *Morrice*; accordingly the Maid went, but came back with a very impertinent Meſſage, that ſhe ſeemed a giddy, conceited Girl, quite another Perſon than Mrs. *Worthy* had repreſented her in her Letter; ſo vain of her Beauty that ſhe believed every Perſon, who but looked at her, or talked with her, were ready to raviſh her; that for her Part, ſince ſhe had made ſuch a Halloo-belloo about an innocent Frolick, where no Harm could poſſibly happen to her, ſhe would have nothing to ſay to her, but let her manage her Affairs as ſhe thought proper, and that ſhe would write to Mrs. *Worthy* very freely what ſhe thought of her Conduct.

Miſs was ſurpriz'd that any modeſt Woman ſhould make ſo light of an Affair of that Nature, and concluded either that Mrs. *Morrice* was an Accomplice in the Deſign, which there were ſome Grounds to

ſuſpect

ſuſpect, from the Character ſhe gave of the Houſe, and her owning her Knowledge of Captain *Price*, or that ſhe was impoſed upon in the Circumſtances of the Affair. It was hard for Miſs to know what to think, and ſhe was under the greateſt Anxiety leſt ſhe ſhould repreſent the Affair to Mr. *Worthy*, as ſhe intimated, in a wrong Light, tho' her Pride would have reſented the Inſolence of the Meſſage, yet her Regard for Mrs. *Worthy*'s Opinion, got the better of it, and ſhe went to wait of Mrs. *Morrice* herſelf to explain the whole Affair to her, but had the Mortification to be deny'd Admittance in very rude Terms.

She return'd to Mrs. *Maſſey* in the utmoſt Perplexity, threw herſelf upon the Bed, and burſt into a Flood of Tears; Good God ſaid ſhe! how does my Stars perſecute me, I no ſooner got clear of one Misfortune than I fell into another; I had but one Friend left in the World, who knew my Caſe and ſympathiz'd in my Miſery, and ſhe is in Danger of being torn from me by the obſtinate Prepoſſeſſions or Malice of one I never injur'd. If I am depriv'd of Mrs. *Worthy*'s Friendſhip and Advice, to whom ſhall I fly for Protection? how ſhall I be recommended, and how can I be entertained

tertained in any honeſt Family without a Character? The very Name of having lodg'd in ſuch a Place as that I have lately come from, muſt blaſt my Reputation and hinder any Family from giving me Shelter. Good Heavens to what Hands ſhall I turn me, but let me not deſpair, that Providence in which I truſt will ſurely relieve me. Oh Sir *Thomas Bountiful*, to what Misfortunes does thy unhappy Paſſion daily expoſe me, how happy might I have been at *Bounty-Park*, had you regarded me leſs; but its ordain'd that I ſhall ſuffer, and I muſt bear it. Here *Maſſey* came in and was ſo mov'd with the Anguiſh ſhe ſaw her in, that ſhe undertook herſelf to go to Mrs. *Morrice* and endeavou rto make her ſenſible of what ſhe had ſuffer'd. She went, but without making any Impreſſion on that poſitive Woman, whoſe Temper was apt to run away with the firſt Notion of things, and continue obſtinate in her firſt Prepoſſeſſions, believing it an Affront to her Judgment to be capable of Error, or being impoſed upon. The treacherous *Polly*, ſuſpecting that as ſhe was the only Acquaintance Miſs had in Town, from whom ſhe could expect Advice or Support; that Mrs. *Morrice* would be the firſt ſhe would acquaint with her Affairs, went to her in order

order to prepoſſeſs her againſt what ſhe might ſay; ſhe told her, that the whole was only an innocent Frolick of the Captain's, whom ſhe had let into the Room only to have a little Diverſion, but that the Gentleman had no Deſign to hurt her, nor could not as ſhe never left the Room, and that he had only ſat down on the Bed, and ſnatch'd a few Kiſſes from her, when ſhe made ſuch a Noiſe, and alarm'd all the Neighbourhood, brought the Watch, and by the Advice of Mrs. *Maſſey* had ſent her Mother to the Round-Houſe. She told this ſo artleſsly, and had in her Face ſuch an Air of Simplicity, that Mrs. *Morrice* believed every Word of it, and perhaps ſhe had this Reaſon to ſeem to give her Credit, that ſhe might not be reflected on by Mrs. *Worthy*, to whom ſhe had writ, that as ſhe had not Accommodation for Miſs herſelf, ſhe had recommended her to a very honeſt Houſe where ſhe would be as ſafe as in her own: Therefore I ſay, it is probable ſhe thought it her Intereſt to ſupport the Character of the Houſe and to turn all that had happen'd upon Miſs's unreaſonable Fears.

On Mrs. *Maſſey*'s Report of the Succeſs of her Viſit, Miſs was inconſolable, and had her Perplexity increaſed by a Meſſage from

from the Conſtable to attend him at the Juſtices, where he intended to carry his Priſoners, in order to give Evidence for their Commitment.

When ſhe had unwillingly the Night before agreed to Mrs. *Weller*'s being carried to the Roundhouſe, ſhe had not reflected on the Conſequence, or that ſhe was likely to have any more Trouble about it, but now ſhe ſhudder'd at the Thought of going before a Magiſtrate, and being publickly expoſed on ſuch an Affair, and beg'd of Mrs. *Maſſey* that ſhe would perſuade the Conſtable to let her go, that her Name might be no more called in queſtion about ſuch an ugly Affair; but Mrs. *Maſſey* repreſented to her, that that would be the way to expoſe her to more Trouble, and to convince Mrs. *Morrice* and her Friends, that the Account *Polly* had given of it was true.

There appeared a good deal of Reaſon in what Mrs. *Maſſey* ſaid; but ſtill ſhe could not think with any Temper of going publickly before a Juſtice, tho' Mrs. *Maſſey* offer'd to go along with her, and get ſome of the Neighbours who were acquainted with the Character of the Houſe, to go likewiſe; ſhe was ſtill unreſolv'd, when the

the Maid brought her up a Letter, ſhe ſaid a Porter had brought her, Miſs open'd it with Surpriſe, as wondering from whence it ſhould come, eſpecially as it was a Man's Hand, and found it was from Captain *Price*. The Contents of it ran thus:

To Mrs. *Sally Dickens*.

MADAM,

I am ſo heartily aſhamed of my Conduct laſt Night, that I could not defer offering you all the Reparation in my Power, and to inform you by what Means I was induced to act a Part ſo inconſiſtent with the Character of a Gentleman. So ſoon Madam, as you came to lodge at Mrs. Weller's, *I was made acquainted with it, and deſir'd to take Apartments in their firſt Floor for the better carrying on a Deſign for which they repreſented you as a proper Subject. As that Woman had been frequently employ'd by me in Affairs of that kind without any very bad Conſequences, I eaſily fell into their Meaſures, and they gave me all the Opportunities I could wiſh to bring Matters to bear, but I found ſomething in your Face and Air, which deterred me from treating you in the groſs Manner I uſed to accoſt others, they had provided,*

and

and the Treatment my firſt Declaration met with, tho' conceived as delicately as ſuch a Deſign could bear, convinc'd me, that I ſhould meet with more difficulty than I was made to expect. I began to be uneaſy with my Inſtrument for engaging me where there appeared ſo little likelihood of Succeſs, but they rally'd me on my Scruples, told me you were deeply ſmitten with my Perſon, and that they had help'd to work you to that Diſpoſition by the Predictions of two Fortune-tellers they had inſtructed for that Purpoſe, and that I had nothing to conquer but a little Baſhfulneſs, which Darkneſs would cure you of, and diſpoſe you to whatever I had a Mind. On this the Plot of my taking Polly's *Place in Bed was lay'd; tho' I declare it upon my Honour, I intended no Violence, I meant only to have perſuaded you to my Meaſures, but the Freedoms I uſed, gave you the Alarm, and hindered me from explaining myſelf. I am extreamly concernd for the Fright I put you in, but could wiſh the Affair had not been made ſo publick, even on your own Accccount. I know the baſe Woman deſerves the ſevereſt Puniſhment, but I believe you had beſt let her fall into other Hands, and not expoſe yourſelf in a Court of Juſtice againſt ſuch a Wretch. The Part I acted is too ungenerous to merit Forgiveneſs, but if a real Concern for what has*

has happen'd, and a ſincere Tender of my beſt Offices can ſoften your Reſentment, I ſhall be in ſome meaſure eaſy. In the mean time let me entreat you to accept of the enclos'd Trifle, (a Bank Note of fifty Pounds) not as a Bribe to corrupt your Virtue, but as an Encouragement to preſerve it, which muſt render you amiable even to thoſe whoſe Paſſions would prompt them to deſtroy it. If there is any thing in my Power to ſerve you in, you may command,

Madam,

Your moſt obedient,

Humble Servant,

THO. PRICE.

Miſs read the Letter, and could not but own, conſidering the Liberties which the Age indulges in Men of Fortune and Quality, that the Captain acted very generouſly, and made as handſome an Apology as any young Woman in her Circumſtance could expect. She ſhew'd it Mrs. *Maſſey*, who would have perſuaded her that all this Contrition flow'd only from his Fear of being expoſed and puniſhed for the intended Rape, and adviſ'd her by no means to drop her Reſentment againſt the Bawd, from whom ſhe might recover conſiderable Damages.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Maſſey* who was actuated by Revenge, and hope of ſome Gain, and not by any Principles of Virtue; for in fact, ſhe and Mrs. *Weller* were both of a Profeſſion, only the one acted more privately than the other, and by an outward Shew of Sanctity had found means to preſerve her Character in the Neighbourhood, and this perhaps was the Cauſe of her Reſentment, for two of a Trade ſeldom agree; but Miſs would not be prevailed on to be her Inſtrument, but ordered the Porter who brought the Letter to wait, and ſat down to write the following ſhort Anſwer to Captain *Price*.

Sir,

'THO' the Attempt upon me laſt
'Night ought not to be eaſily for-
'given, yet I think I owe ſo much to the
'frank Acknowledgment you have made
'as not to be over ſanguine in my Reſent-
'ment againſt the Wretch that was your
'Inſtrument. If you can perſuade her to
'make any Acknowledgment of her Errors,
'and the Conſtable to releaſe her without
'going before a Magiſtrate in hopes of her
'Repentance, ſhe ſhall have my Forgive-
'neſs.

'I return you, Sir, the Preſent you were
'pleaſed to offer me; for as my Virtue, I

'thank

'thank God, is above the Temptation of a 'Bribe, ſo it does not ſtand in need of any 'other Encouragement to Perſeverance, 'than that Pleaſure which is the conſtant 'Attendant of conſcious Innocence. How-'ever, I thank you for your generous In-'tention.

I am, Sir,

your moſt

humble Servant,

SARAH DICKENS.

When Mrs. *Maſſey* ſaw her folding up the Bank Note with the Letter, what the plague is that you are about, ſure you are not ſo mad as to return the Note, let me ſee what you have writ; ſhe took the Letter out of her Hand and read it. Ods my Life, if you were a Duchеſs you could not act more haughtily, do you think yourſelf above taking a Preſent of fifty Pounds, od, I wiſh any Body would make me ſuch an Offer, ſee if I ſhould return it, no faith wou'd not I; take my Advice and write another Letter, and keep the Money, it will be of uſe to you when all your Friends have forſaken you. Excuſe me, reply'd Miſs, I ſcorn to receive a Favour of this kind from any Man, much leſs from

from one who had form'd ſo baſe a Deſign; it would be giving him too much Advantage over me, and encourage him perhaps to renew his Attempts upon my Virtue. Mrs. *Maſſey* ſaid a good deal to make her alter her Reſolutions, and was almoſt in a Pet about it; for its more than probable her greedy Diſpoſition had form'd ſome Pretenſions to a Share of it: but Miſs was obſtinate, ſeal'd it up in the Letter, and deliver'd it with her own Hands to the Porter, who return'd in about half an Hour with a Letter from Mrs. *Weller* acknowledging her Fault in the moſt humble and penitent Terms, and begging her to ſend a Line to the Conſtable to releaſe her; which ſhe did, and this Affair was wholly compromis'd, except in regard to Mrs. *Morrice*, whoſe Reſentment Miſs was now leſs anxious about as the Letter from the Captain and Mrs. *Weller*'s would juſtify her, ſhould Mrs. *Morrice* attempt to impoſe any falſe Account of the Fact on Mrs. *Worthy*.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Containing the first Part of Miſs Summers's *Tranſactions with an eminent Stateſman and his neceſſary Woman, a Linnen-Draper in the* Strand.

OUR Fair Unfortunate, waited ſeveral Days at Mrs. *Maſſey*'s with great Impatience, expecting a Return to the Letter ſhe had writ to Mrs. *Worthy* concerning her Diſappointment at Mrs. *Davis*'s, and ſhe was unwilling to write to her again concerning her Misfortune at Mrs. *Weller*'s, till ſhe could learn what Mrs. *Morrice* had wrote on that Head, fearing to be the Cauſe of any Difference between that Lady and any ſhe had an Eſteem for, which ſhe was reſolv'd to avoid unleſs her own Juſtification made it abſolutely neceſſary. Mrs. *Worthy* had writ an Anſwer to that Letter, but Mrs. *Morrice* under whoſe Cover it was directed, had for her own Reaſons kept it up; ſo that Miſs at laſt deſpaired of hearing any more from that Family, which threw her into the utmoſt Perplexity, as ſhe knew no other means of getting either Character or Recommendation. She had none to complain

plain to but Mrs. *Maſſey*, who comforted her all ſhe could, and promiſed that ſhe would look out for a Place, and accordingly in an Evening or two thereafter carried her to viſit a Gentlewoman who kept a Linnen-Draper's Shop in the *Strand*, in whoſe Power ſhe ſaid it was to be of great Uſe to her, as ſhe was acquainted with many very good Families her Cuſtomers. This new Acquaintance received Miſs very politely, and told her, on the Character Mrs. *Maſſey* had given of her, and her own Appearance ſhe would ſoon find her a Service ſuitable to her Inclinations.

Miſs paid her a Viſit or two in Company with Mrs. *Maſſey*, and afterwards uſed to go there almoſt every other Day, the Linen-Draper uſing her with great Tenderneſs and Friendſhip: In one of theſe Viſits in an Afternoon, an elderly, grave Gentleman who appeared to be about ſixty Years of Age, lighted from his Coach, and after ordering ſome few things out of the Shop, went Backwards and ſat down with them to Tea. His Air, which had ſomething grand in it, as well as his Age, gave Miſs a very high Idea of this Viſitor, and her Appearance, tho' very plainly dreſs'd, ſeem'd to draw from the Stateſman, for he was of that Claſs, more

more than ordinary Reſpect. He ſtay'd about an Hour entertaining them with common Chat, and then went to his Coach. When he was gone, the Linnen-Draper told Miſs, that he was a Man of great Conſequence, and of great good Nature and Humanity, and had done ſeveral very remarkable Things for People in Diſtreſs, that ſhe was glad ſhe happen'd to be there, and by his Diſcourſe that he ſeem'd to have taken a Liking to her; for added ſhe, the Countenance of ſuch a Man will have great Weight with any Family where you may be placed, and he may be otherwiſe of uſe to you. He calls frequently here; my Huſband that's dead and gone was his Godſon, and God bleſs him, he has been my beſt Friend ſince he died; I'll take an Opportunity to ſpeak to him of you the next time I ſee him, and I wiſh he may often find you here, becauſe that will make him believe I am the more intereſted in you. Suppoſe I ſhould tell him you are a Couſin of mine, I hope you would not be offended, ſince its only to ſerve you; Miſs told her ſhe did her a particular Kindneſs, and ſhe might take what means ſhe pleas'd to recommend her, ſince ſhe could not doubt but the Countenance of a Man of his Years and Conſequence would be of uſe to a

young Woman in her Circumſtances without Friends, Relations, or Acquaintance, either to adviſe or protect her.

Nothing further paſſed at this Viſit, but Miſs went home highly pleas'd with the Hopes of the Stateſman's Favour and Protection, and communicated her good Luck to Mrs. *Maſſey*, whom ſhe thank'd as the means of any thing that ſhould happen. The other congratulated her on the Proſpect, and ſaid, that nothing could happen more opportunely, for that her Friend could do any thing with him, wondered ſhe had not thought of it ſooner, and adviſed her by all means to go often to the Shop to put her in mind of ſpeaking.

Miſs was eaſily perſuaded to follow her Advice in which ſhe could foreſee no Danger, but a ſtrong Probability of Advantage, and went every Day to the Linnen-Draper's almoſt for a Fortnight, in which Time, ſhe ſaw the Stateſman two or three times, who ſeem'd every Viſit more obliging, and treated her with a kind of Fatherly Tenderneſs, which Miſs took as a great Mark of Eſteem from a Man of his Rank and Quality. The Linnen-Draper told her, ſhe had ſpoken to him, and that he had promiſed

miſed to befriend her, which, ſaid ſhe, is a great deal from him, for he always does more than he promiſes; you'll hear nothing of it till he ſurprizes you with ſomething greatly to your Advantage, for I aſſure you, he has a great Value for you, beſides, that he thinks you a Siſter's Daughter of mine, whom he knew in the Weſt of *England*. Miſs made her the moſt grateful Acknowledgments ſhe could think of, and to expreſs her Senſe of her Civility, laid out three or four Pounds in Linnen and Cambrick, which the Linnen-Draper would have had her take till ſhe was provided for, but ſhe deſired to be excuſed and paid the ready Money, and in return to Mrs. *Maſſey* for her Share of the promiſed good Fortune, made her a preſent of ſome Cambrick to make Mobbs, and ſome Lace to go round them.

A Week or two paſs'd in theſe pleaſing Hopes, when one Morning the Linnen-Draper ſent for her in a great Hurry, and to dreſs herſelf as clean and neat as ſhe could. Miſs's Heart beat for Joy, ſhe was ſure now, that ſhe was going into ſome Settlement out of the tireſome dependant Life ſhe now led, which was highly irkſome to her; ſhe was ſoon dreſs'd, took a Coach, and drove

with great haſte to her Friend the Linnen-Draper, who received her with open Arms, and now my Girl, I hope I have done for you, his Honour was here laſt Night, and ask'd for his pretty Daughter, as you know he calls you; he has ſomething in his Head for you I'll warrant you, tho' he would not tell me what it was, but deſir'd me to ſend you to his Houſe, this Morning, in *Ar—g—n. Street*; you muſt take a Coach and make haſte, for this is his Hour, and I long to hear the Succeſs of it, for upon my Life it would be a great Pleaſure to me to be inſtrumental in doing you any Good. Miſs thank'd her, but made ſome Heſitation at going by herſelf to call of a Gentleman, and would have perſuaded the Linnen-Draper to go along with her, but the other pretended Buſineſs in the Shop, and rally'd her for her making any Scruple about waiting of a Man in Power, and of his Years, about Buſineſs.

Miſs was laugh'd out of her Scruples, and took Coach for the old Stateſman's, to whoſe Cloſet ſhe was immediately introduc'd. His Daughter a young Lady every way amiable, about the Age of twenty-one, and another about twelve, and a Boy about nine Years of Age, were in the Room with him,

him, but retired as ſoon as Miſs entered, the eldeſt giving her a Look as ſhe paſs'd mix'd with an Air of Pity and Contempt.

The Stateſman got up from his great eaſy Chair, as ſoon as ſhe came in, and receiv'd her with great Civility, and placed her hard by him. He had on a large Furr Cap, that cover'd his Ears, and almoſt all his Face, ſo that nothing but a long Noſe and a Chin of an immoderate Length, appeared to publick View, he had on a pair of thick-mill'd Stockings, which together with a little of the Gout or Dropſy, made his old Legs appear like two Mill-poſts, he had a Night-gown lin'd with Fur, and a Flannel Waiſtcoat under one of Cloth, richly trim'd with Gold; in ſhort, his whole Figure was a Compoſition of feeble Old Age, and impotent Grandeur. So that Miſs muſt have expected a Declaration of Love from her Grandmother as ſoon as from this Figure before her, ſo that however fondly he treated her, yet ſhe was not under the leaſt Apprehenſion of a Thing of that ſort, but look'd upon him with the Reſpect of a Child to a Father, and waited impatiently till his Honour would be pleas'd to communicate the Deſign of his deſiring her to wait of him.

At laſt the Courtier was pleaſed to open himſelf, I deſired Mrs. ——— to ſend you to me, that I might have an Opportunity of converſing with you freely. I aſſure you, Child, I have conceived a more than ordinary Eſteem for you, and am glad that I have it in my Power to ſerve a virtuous young Woman, and protect her Youth from the Snares the wicked young Rakes of the Town are apt to form upon ſuch as you. This grave Preamble gave Miſs ſome Spirits, and aſſured her ſomething very good and pious was deſigned for her by the Stateſman. He went on, Now my dear, you muſt be very free with me, and let me know your Circumſtances that I may the better judge what is proper to be done for you. Miſs thanked him for his Condeſcenſion, and told him in few Words, that ſhe was a young Woman who by the Indulgence and Bounty of her Friends had received a tolerable Education in *Carmarthenſhire*; and that now ſhe had nothing elſe to depend on but earning an honeſt Livelihood in the Service of ſome Lady whoſe Example might ſtrengthen her Principles, and Authority protect her from the Snares into which Youth are to be led. That ſhe had come up to Town in Hopes of waiting on a Lady who

who, unfortunately for her, was gone to the *Spa* in *Germany*, and was now deſtitute of any Hopes of being provided for but by the Intereſt of Mrs. ———, who had been very kind to her. It is well, my good Girl, I ſhall be a Father to you, and do more for you than your Couſin can, for whom I have a great Eſteem, and on her Account, but chiefly on your own, I think to place you in my own Family. The Houſekeeper I have is old and infirm, and incapable of looking after my Family as it ought to be. I ſhall ſtill keep her as an Aſſiſtant to you, her Experience will ſoon let you into what is proper for you to know, but you ſhall have the whole Authority over my Servants and are to permit her to interfere no further than you think proper. My eldeſt Daughter, whom you ſaw go out of the Room as you come in, will uſe you as a Companion, when once ſhe knows your Worth, and you may find yourſelf quite happy in the Family, till ſome eaſy Place at Court becomes vacant, which I ſhall certainly procure you, there is one which I have in my Eye, it is at preſent in Poſſeſſion of a Woman much advanced in Years and very infirm, ſo that I hope in a little Time to make that a Settlement for you for Life.

Miſs in very modeſt Terms acknowledged her Obligation to the old Courtier, and hinted that ſhe was unfit for a Charge of that Nature, as ſhe had been bred in the Country, and a Stranger to the Œconomy and Management of ſuch a Family as his Honour's; but he cut her ſhort, told her he was ſatisfied in her Abilities to ſerve his Purpoſe; and that his old Houſekeeper would in leſs than a Week, make her as knowing as herſelf, and that he would not name Wages, becauſe he was reſolved to put her upon a different Footing than a mere Hireling, and think himſelf obliged to do for her as a young Creature for whom he had the greateſt Eſteem, and who depended only upon him. Saying this, he took one of her Hands and put a Paper in it, in which was wrapt up about twelve Guineas, Take this, my pretty little Daughter, by Way of Earneſt; young Women want Linnen and a thouſand little Things we Men know nothing of; provide your ſelf in what you want, and when you want Money, only let me know it and you ſhall be ſupplied.

Miſs looking upon herſelf now as hired, got up from the Chair, made the Stateſman a low Courteſy and told him ſhe hoped

ſhe

ſhe ſhould behave ſo in his Service as to deſerve his good Opinion, and deſired to know when he would pleaſe that ſhe ſhould enter upon her Charge. Sit down Child, I keep no State with my favourite Servants, I ſhall be angry if you treat me with too diſtant Reſpect; think me your Friend and not your Maſter. She ſat down again with ſome Reluctance, for ſhe was willing to accuſtom herſelf as ſoon as poſſible to the Humility becoming her Station, and the old Stateſman went on, you ſhall be immediately entered upon your Charge, for I am impatient till I have you wholly under my own Care. But my Dear, I muſt give you ſome Cautions neceſſary for your Conduct in a Family where there are a great many Servants. You muſt keep at a great Diſtance from the Men, and look upon yourſelf as you really are, every way their Superior, and don't permit them to be toying or ſlabbering you; Freedoms of that kind leſſens you in their Eſteem, and weakens your Authority; beſides that, they by inſenſible Degrees weaken your Virtue; for indeed *Sally*, drawing his Chair nearer her, I ſhould take it ill to hear that any of them were free with this pretty Hand, you muſt keep all this for me, ſqueezing it between his wither'd Paws. She ſtared at him as not knowing where this would end.—

Indeed you muſt, my little *Sally Dickens*, my pretty little Pigs-nies, and theſe little Pigs Eyes muſt look at nothing elſe but me; and theſe little pit-a-pat Bubbies (patting them with his Finger) muſt be touched by nobody but your own Dad, and theſe little peep-a-peep Footies, ſtooping down to lay hold of her Foot, are all my Goods and Chattels, and nobody's elſe; are not they, my pretty, ſweet *Dickens*; efakins are they, and ſomething elſe above here, going to ſlip his laſcivious Fiſts up her Petticoats, I ſhall feel all, ſee all, and—— His Words and Actions were all ſo quick, ſo unexpected, and ſhocked the aſtoniſhed Fair ſo much that he had played all his apiſh Tricks, and had got his Hand as far as her Garter before ſhe could recover from her Amazement, but then ſhe ſtarted from her Chair, gave the old Letcher a Puſh, which laid him flat on his Back, his Head falling with ſome Force againſt the Fender.

She had the Paper of Guineas ſtill in her Hand, which ſhe threw at his Head; is this the pious Protection you would afford an innocent Maid, is this the Deſign of your canting Friendſhip? take the baſe Hire, may it and your own Vices choak you, deceitful Villain, and threw herſelf out of the Room

Room in a violent Rage, with which ſhe had certainly burſt, if ſhe had not given vent to it by a Torrent of Tears. The old Houſekeeper met her on the firſt Flight of the Stairs, and ſeeing her thus diſordered, aſked her what was the Matter? Go, aſk the baſe Villain your Maſter, replied Miſs in a Paſſion, and puſh'd by her, but in the Hurry miſtook her Way out, as there was a Turning in the Entry, and before ſhe was aware had got into one of the Parlours where the Stateſman's eldeſt Daughter was ſitting, who had overheard what ſhe had ſaid to the Houſekeeper. Miſs on ſeeing her ſtarted back; Pardon me, Madam, ſaid ſhe, I have miſtaken my Way out of a Houſe where I wiſh I had never come. I am ſorry Madam, you ſhould meet with any Thing here to make you wiſh ſo, replied the young Lady, with great Condeſcenſion, but be pleaſed to ſit down and compoſe yourſelf, and I ſhall undertake to ſee you ſafe out. As this was delivered with great Tenderneſs, Miſs ſat down and gave full Vent to thoſe Tears ſhe before endeavoured to ſmother. The other ſaw her ſo uneaſy, and gueſſing, by her Father's Practices, to which ſhe was no Stranger, at the true Cauſe, could not help dropping a Tear in Sympathy to the lovely Mourner, but the Delicacy

of the Subject, and a Father being concern'd, hindered her giving her that Conſolation by Words to which her good Nature prompted her.

While they were both employed in this dumb Sorrow, a Footman came in, and addreſſing himſelf to Miſs, told her that his Honour deſired ſhe would immediately go up Stairs again. No, ſaid ſhe, in a violent Paſſion, go tell the old Monſter I have nothing to ſay to him, and was making towards the Door. The Fellow had the Impudence to oppoſe her going out, and told her in an inſolent Tone, that ſhe needed not give herſelf any of theſe Airs, for the Porter had Orders not to let her paſs till his Maſter had ſpoke with her. Good God, cried ſhe, ſinking again into her Chair, to what am I reduced, that ſuch a Wretch as this dares inſult me! The young Lady turned to the Footman, bid him be gone and tell his Maſter ſhe would be anſwerable for the young Gentlewoman, ſo ſoon as ſhe was in ſome Meaſure compoſed. The Footman obeyed and went out, and the Lady bolted the Door after him. Oh Heavens! cried Miſs, what are you about Madam? ſure you will not join in detaining me; I conjure you, by all the Modeſty of your Sex

Sex to have ſome Compaſſion on an innocent Maid, and let me paſs. Be not alarmed, Madam, replied the other, in a very compaſſionate Tone, I don't mean to detain you, but to ſecure your Retreat; compoſe yourſelf for a Moment and dry up your Tears, and I ſhall conduct you out by a Door which leads from this Apartment into the Park, from whence you may make your Eſcape. Miſs thanked her, as well as her Tears and Sobs would permit her, endeavoured to calm herſelf, and drew her Bonnet over her Face, and the young Lady took her by the Hand and led her from thence into an inner Room, out of which ſhe let her by a Key into the Park, which ſhe croſſed to the Gate at *Hyde-Park Corner*, from thence took Coach, and got ſafe to Mrs. *Maſſey*'s.

She went immediately up to her Chamber, without meeting any of the Family but the Maid, who let her in, and gave vent to the exceſſive Sorrow that overwhelmed her in a Torrent of Tears and heart-breaking Complaints. Good God, why was I form'd to create ſuch foul Deſires in all that ſee me? Is there any thing in my Conduct or Carriage that ſhould give Encouragement to ſuch baſe Deſigns as Men of all Stations, Ages

Ages and Temper have form'd upon me. If it is my Fault that I am thus perſecuted with their hated Paſſions, Oh! teach me ſome pitying Angel to amend it, that I may taſte ſome Repoſe, and enjoy my Innocence in Peace, or direct me to ſome deſert Wild, where, free from the Snares of falſe deluding Friends, and the Violence of human Monſters, I may live but innocent with the leſs vicious Savages. I have been little more than two Months from that hoſpitable Manſion, where I learned to abhor Vice, and all its Appearances, and yet I have gone thro' a Sea of Difficulties. Oh! how can I think to paſs a whole Life thus expoſed, thus defenceleſs, and a Prey to every Ruffian that dares attack me. Shield my Innocence, Oh! my God, in thee I put my Truſt and Hope, and give me thy Aid to bear thy afflicting Hand without falling into Deſpair, or murmuring at thy Diſpenſations. She paſſed an Hour or two in this bitter Anguiſh, and then began to reflect with herſelf what Account ſhe ſhould give to Mrs. *Maſſey*, and her Friend the Linnen-Draper, of her Reception from the Stateſman. Theſe two Women had behaved with ſo much Modeſty and Decorum before her, and ſo often expreſſed their Abhorrence of the Viciouſneſs of the preſent Age, and given her ſo many

Cautions

Cautions againſt the Snares to which her Youth and Beauty naturally expoſed her, that ſhe would not harbour a Notion that either one or other of them were privy to the Stateſman's Deſign upon her Virtue. But tho' that Thought might give her Encouragement to make her Complaint to them of the baſe Uſage ſhe had met with, yet ſhe recollected the high Veneration they had always expreſſed for that old Letcher, and how improbable they might think ſuch a Relation, reported of a Man of his Years, Infirmities and Gravity, and that it was more than probable they might treat what ſhe ſaid in the ſame Manner Mrs. *Morrice* had done her Affair with Captain *Price*, and by that Means ſhe ran the Riſque of loſing their Friendſhip for ever, as ſhe had done that of Mrs. *Morrice* on a like Occaſion; therefore ſhe determined to conceal the whole Affair. She had but juſt come to this Reſolution when Mrs. *Maſſey*, who had been abroad when ſhe came in, came up to her Chamber to learn the News, and found her ſitting in a very melancholy Poſture. What's the Matter, ſaid ſhe, Miſs *Sally*, you ſeem dejected, no new Diſappointment has happened I hope; I was in full Expectation that Mrs. ——— had good News for you; I met her in the Market,

Market, and ſhe had juſt Time to whiſper me that you were gone to the Squire's: Pray tell us the News, for I ſhall ſincerely rejoice in any thing that may be for your Good.

I have no News, replied Miſs faintly, only that his Honour was pleaſed to make me an Offer which I am ſure I am not fit for.——What was that pray? Why to be his own Houſekeeper; you know I have been always in the Country, and how can it be ſuppoſed that a young Woman like me ſhould know how to manage a *London* Family of Quality, or one of my Years pretend to govern ſo many Servants as he keeps? It would only expoſe me. I want only to wait of ſome Lady, that I think I am fit for in ſome Shape, and I will undertake nothing but what I can honeſtly diſcharge. —— And ſo you have been ſuch a Fool as to refuſe the Place, I'm ſure you have been bewitched to have it in your Power to make your Fortune at once, and then to caſt it at your Tail for mere ſilly Scruples; why Child, his Honour knew your Want of Experience, and would have found People to inſtruct you, if he put up with what you knew, and was willing to learn. I think it was not your Buſineſs

to

to make Difficulties where there is none, but you know your own Buſineſs beſt, I wiſh you may not repent your being ſo raſh. I am ſure Mrs. —— will be very angry to be ſo ſerved after taking ſo much Pains, but you and ſhe agree about that, you cannot ſay I adviſed you to it, I waſh my Hands of it. And ſo went out of the Room in a Kind of Pet.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing the ſecond Part of the Stateſman's Plot upon Miſs Summers; *her being ſent to a Spunging-Houſe, and the providential Defeat of the Courtier's Schemes and the Confuſion of his Tools.*

THE Manner in which Mrs. *Maſſey* received the Turn ſhe gave to the Affair of her old Lover encreaſed her Perplexity, and ſhe now foreſaw, that ſhe was in a fair Way of loſing her Friendſhip at any Rate, and that it would be ſtill more difficult to preſerve that of the Linnen-Draper, on whom ſhe thought proper to wait that Afternoon, and gave her pretty much the ſame Account of the Matter as ſhe had done Mrs. *Maſſey*. The Linnen-Draper did not ſeem ſo much piqued as ſhe expected, but rather

rather told her that ſhe could not blame her for being unwilling to undertake ſo great a Charge, and wiſhed only that ſhe had not given ſo peremptory a Refuſal as ſhe ſaid ſhe had. She gave her Promiſe to look out for ſuch a Place as ſhe ſeemed to wiſh for, and they parted pretty good Friends.

This Behaviour of Miſs to Mrs. *Maſſey* and the Linnen-Draper in not expoſing to them the Stateſman's Behaviour, gave the amorous old Gentleman a very high Opinion of her Prudence, and ſome Hopes that he might obtain his Suit if he changed the Form of his Proceedings, and acted in a Manner more ſuitable to her Pride, of which he conceived ſhe had a large Share. He allowed two or three Days to paſs, without attempting any Thing, and then wrote her a Letter, ſtuffed full of amorous Compliments, begged Pardon, that he had conceived ſo mean a Thought of her as to employ her as a Servant in his Family, who was the ſole Sovereign of his Heart, and concluded with an Offer of a Settlement for Life of five Hundred a Year and a genteel Houſe to live in, provided only ſhe would permit him now and then to viſit her and gaze upon thoſe Charms that had captivated all his Faculties; and in a Poſtſcript thank'd her

her for her Diſcretion in not expoſing him to her Couſin; and begging her to obſerve the ſame Caution for the future, but to direct for him at his own Houſe.

This Letter, as ſhe was told, was brought by a Footman before ſhe was up, whoſe livery they did not know, and ſaid that it requir'd no anſwer. She opened it, as believing it might come from Mr. *Worthy*'s Family, but was ſurprized to find it from her wither'd Gallant.

She read it with great Emotion and Contempt, and ſealed it up in a blank Cover, directed it to the Stateſman, and that her Landlady or none of the Family might know any Thing of it, put it herſelf into the Penny-Poſt. She was peſtered almoſt every Day with Epiſtles of this Nature, which ſhe always ſerved in the ſame manner, with this Difference, that knowing the Hand ſhe never opened them; for ſhe was unwilling to give Directions not to take them in, for fear of giving a Suſpicion, or obliging her to explain herſelf to Mrs. *Maſſey* and her Friend.

In about three Weeks after this Correſpondence by Letter with the Stateſman began,

gan, the Maid of the Houſe (who appeared to be a good-natur'd honeſt Girl, and much in Miſs's good Graces, as ſhe was obliging and ready to do her any little Offices ſhe would) thought proper to diſappear all of a ſudden, and to carry off with her every Stitch of the unfortunate Miſs *Sally Dickens*'s Cloaths and Linnen, with a little Hand-Trunk ſhe had bought ſince ſhe came to Town, in which was her Watch, Jewels, and all the little Money ſhe had, except two or three Guineas and ſome Silver ſhe had in a Purſe in her Pocket, and Lady *Bountiful*'s Picture, which ſhe wore, tied with a black Ribbon, about her Arm.

Mrs. *Maſſey* and ſhe had been that Night invited out to Supper at the Linnen-Draper's, and did not come Home till turned of Eleven, when one of the Children told them the Maid *Clara* had gone out about two Hours ago, and had not come Home. Mrs. *Maſſey* ſeemed ſurprized at her long Stay, and begged Miſs to ſit up a little to bear her Company till ſhe came in. They ſat up till paſt Twelve, and then deſpaired of her coming, believing ſome Accident had happened to her; but never once ſuſpected her Honeſty, till Miſs went up to her Room, and came down Stairs in a violent Hurry, crying

crying out, ſhe was robbed, and all ſhe had gone. God forbid! cries Mrs. *Maſſey*; but they found it too true, and pretended to miſs ſome ſilver Spoons, but did not value her own Loſs ſo much as Miſs's, which was much more conſiderable, and endeavoured to comfort her all that ſhe could, telling her that next Morning they would get a Warrant to ſearch for her, and might perhaps find her before ſhe had embezzled any of the Money or Goods. This was but ſmall Comfort to one in her unhappy Circumſtances, without Hopes of a Place, and without a Stitch but what was on her Back, and ſome Linnen at the Waſherwoman's, and but a Trifle in Money that could ſuppor her but a very inconſiderable Time. But it was all ſhe had to truſt to, and ſhe was obliged to go up to Bed with a heavy Heart, not to reſt but bewail her Misfortunes.

In the Morning betimes the Linnen-Draper, as by Accident, came to breakfaſt, and condoled in a friendly Manner with Miſs; told her to keep up her Spirits; that ſhe would help her to recover what ſhe had loſt, and if ſhe did not ſucceed ſhe ſhould not want till ſhe was provided for, for that ſhe

loved

loved her as her own Child, and would uſe her as ſuch.

They all three went to a Magiſtrate, and obtained a Warrant for the ſuſpected Thief, and employed a Lawyer to manage the Affair, who ſet Thief-Catchers to work to ſearch for *Clara*. This was attended with great Expence, which Miſs launched out as far as the Stock would go, ſo that before Night all her Gold was gone, and ſhe had but a few Shillings remaining; and yet the next Day brought along with it a greater Expence, without any Tidings of the Thief. In ſhort, in leſs than a Fortnight's Time, in which they kept her in Hopes of recovering her Loſs, they made Shift to run her in Debt to Mrs. ——— the Linnen-Draper (who in a Manner forced the Money upon her, telling her ſhe would never aſk a Farthing of it unleſs ſhe was perfectly able to pay her) upwards of twenty Pounds.

The Lawyer, who had got moſt of the Money, began to have the Conſcience to conceive ſome Doubts of ever meeting with the Thief; and what was extraordinary in a Man of his Profeſſion, told Miſs he would not adviſe her to throw away any more Money after her, but to put up with the firſt

firſt Loſs. She was eaſily perſuaded to deſiſt from a Courſe ſhe diſapproved of as ſoon as the little ſhe had herſelf was gone, for it went to her Heart to go in Debt, or be under Obligations ſhe was in no likelihood of repaying, and appeared much dejected when ſhe ſaw that the kind Mrs. —— the Linnen-Draper, ſhould be ſo much a Loſer by her: But that good-natur'd Woman was far from being wearied of doing her good Offices. She told her, ſhe had heard of a Place for her, which ſhe was ſure ſhe could recommend her to; but that ſhe muſt appear very genteel, as it was a Family of great Diſtinction, and for that Purpoſe would fit her out in Cloaths and Linnen becoming the Station ſhe was going to.

Miſs would have excuſed her accepting of any Thing; but the other inſiſted on it, gave her Money to clear Mrs. *Maſſey*, and with that, and the Neceſſaries ſhe bought, added twenty Pounds more to the former Account, for which ſhe was ſo kind as to aſk only her Note payable on Demand; not that ſhe wanted any Security, but as People were all mortal, it would do no Hurt that ſhe had ſomething to ſhew for it, which ſhe would never ask till ſhe could pay her without incommoding herſelf.

This

This was too reaſonable to be refuſed to ſo generous a Friend; the Note was accepted, and mutual Proteſtations of Gratitude on the one Hand, and eternal Friendſhip on the other, paſſed between them; and they parted, appointing to meet in two or three Days to go to the promiſed Place. But a Week paſſed without any Tidings of it, and at the End the Linnen-Draper told her, in a Viſit ſhe made her on Purpoſe, that ſhe was certainly born under an unlucky Planet, for that nothing proſpered that was propoſed for her Advantage. For my Share, ſays ſhe, I don't know what to to think of it; I never ſaw any thing ſo unfortunate in my Life: The Lady's Woman I thought to recommend you to, ſtays again; ſo that we are now as much to ſeek as ever.

Miſs was thunderſtruck with Concern, and tormented herſelf with unavailing Complaints; which the other, contrary to her uſual Cuſtom, chid her for.——Come, ſays ſhe, what ſignifies crying and complaining; you muſt think of ſome Way to aſſiſt yourſelf, and do me Juſtice, for I can do no more than I have done, and you cannot be ſo deſtitute of Friends, as not to have ſome who

who will clear the Triſle you owe me; for indeed I can be no longer without either the Money or Security; it is too much to loſe by a mere Stranger, as you know you are to me.

If a Ghoſt, or an Apparition from the Dead had appeared to the diſconſolate Mourner, ſhe could not be more amazed than at this unexpected Speech, ſo contrary to all her former Behaviour and Promiſes. She was ſo ſtunned, that ſhe had not Power to anſwer her, and the other left her to think at her own Leiſure on the new Subject of Contemplation ſhe had afforded her.

The Sorrows of the unfortunate Fair were too full to permit her to think rationally on what ſhe ſhould do. She could not even relieve her burſting Heart by complaining, nor knew not where to fly for Advice. Her Landlady came in, and found her all in Tears.——I gueſs, ſays ſhe, what is the Matter; Mrs. ——— has been in a plaguy ill Humour To-day; ſhe has met with a great Loſs that is like to hurt her Credit, and that makes her urgent for her Money: But, for Shame, don't be ſo much caſt down; Things are not ſo bad as you ima-

gine; you may yet recover yourſelf, and live above the World.——Alas! reply'd the unhappy Girl, even Hope is fled; I have no Reſource but to pray to be taken out of this World, where dwells nothing but Miſery, Diſappointment, Falſhood and Deceit. Where ſhall I go? How can I relieve myſelf? It was much againſt my Inclination to run in Debt, and never thought to be thus preſs'd for it.

Hang the Debt, reply'd the other, you may ſoon get out of it; its only writing to the Squire, and letting him know your Situation, I lay my Life he clears it, and much more; or if he ſhould not, you know Captain *Price* will, who was ſo generous as to ſend you fifty Pounds. Come, get up and write to them both, and before Night I'll engage you are as rich as before you was robb'd, and all your Debts paid to boot.—No, reply'd Miſs, in a paſſionate Tone, I'll rather die, than do ſo mean a Thing as apply to either of them.——Very well, Madam, reply'd the other jeeringly, don't be angry; I but gave my Advice; if you don't follow it, you may let it alone; but I fancy you'll find you muſt do that, or worſe, before it's long.—And ſo flung out of the Room,

Room, leaving the diſconſolate Miſs *Summers* much worſe perplexed than before.

It would be painful to deſcribe the Agony this unhappy young Creature ſuffered for the Remainder of that Day, and the ſucceeding Night Sleep never cloſed her Eyes; and the more ſhe thought, the leſs Probability ſhe ſaw of being extricated out of this Difficulty, and the more diſmal the future Proſpect of her Life appeared. Yet in the Height of her Anguiſh ſhe never once repented that ſhe had left Lady *Bountiful*; the Reflection, that all ſhe ſuffered flowed from a ſteady Purſuit of her Duty, was the only Gleam of Comfort ſhe had to ſupport her from ſinking under her preſent Load of Woe.

From the Time of her being robb'd till now, ſhe had received no Letters from her amorous Stateſman, and ſhe concluded that he had quitted the Chace; but ſhe was grievouſly miſtaken, for the Morning ſucceeding this melancholy Night, a Letter in the ſame Hand was brought up to her, which ſhe without opening, ſealed up in a blank Cover as the former, and put into the Penny-Poſt that ſame Forenoon. That Day her Landlady behaved very coldly to

her, ſcarce vouchſafing to ſpeak to her, which was a freſh Addition to her Sorrow, eſpecially as ſhe was a Week or two in Arrears for Diet and Lodging, and without a Penny to diſcharge it. At Supper a Hint was dropped, that her Week would be up as on *Saturday*, and that a little Money would be agreeable. This ſerved her for Matter of Reflection for that Night, and render'd her Sorrows unſupportable. But next Morning ſhe had ſome more to exerciſe her Patience and Fortitude; for Mrs. ——— the Linnen-Draper, paid her a very early Viſit, and told her with very little Ceremony, that ſhe was come to know her Reſolves about her Money, for ſhe muſt know what ſhe had to truſt to.

Alas! Madam, cry'd the unhappy Miſs, what have I done that you ſhould behave thus to me? I made no Secret of my Circumſtances when you obliged me with the Money. You know I told you I had neither Friends, Acquaintance or Relations on whom I could depend for a Morſel of Bread, and that I had no Proſpect of paying you, and yet you was ſo fatally kind as to compel me to accept of your Favours, why then will you oppreſs me, and aſk me for Impoſſibilities?——Don't talk to me of Impoſſibilities!

Impoſſibilities!—I know, if your ſtubborn Pride will ſubmit to it, you might pay me and much more; but you are above it, forſooth! but I'll try, Gentlewoman, if a Jail can bring down that proud Stomach of yours; it has humbled as high Heads before now;—and without waiting her Reply (which ſhe was indeed in no Capacity to make her) flew down Stairs, flapping the Door after her as if ſhe would have pulled down the Houſe.

Mrs. *Maſſey* ſucceeded in her Place, but not with Compliments of Condolence, but like one of *Job*'s Comforters, with bitter Gibes.—I told you what your Obſtinacy would produce, but you would not be ruled by me; you'll ſoon ſee what you have brought yourſelf to, and try then if Tears and girliſh Sobbing will relieve you.—Peace, for God's Sake, dear Mrs. *Maſſey!* reply'd Miſs *Sally*, don't torment me with uſeleſs Upbraidings: God's my Judge, I act honeſtly by every Body, and if I am unjuſtly oppreſſed I muſt bear it, till it pleaſe God to relieve me, who alone can, for here on Earth I find I have no Friend.—Mrs. *Maſſey* went on in the former Key, always pointing at her Refuſal to apply to the Squire or Captain *Price*; to which Miſs

made no Reply, but heard all patiently, till Mrs. *Maſſey* was called down by a loud Knock at the Door.

She had not ſtaid away above five Minutes, when ſhe came up again introducing three Men into Miſs's Room, ſaying, Here are ſome Gentlemen (though they looked more like Pickpockets) that want to ſpeak with you; and then went haſtily out. The Gentlemen, as Mrs. *Maſſey* termed them, did not leave Miſs long time to gueſs at their Buſineſs. Their Leader ſoon informed her, that he had a Writ againſt her at the Suit of Mrs. —— in the *Strand*, ſhewed her the fatal Parchment (than which her Dead-Warrant would have been leſs ſhocking) and told her ſhe muſt come along with him to his Houſe.

On all other Occaſions, Tears and Complaints gave Relief to her full-ſwoln Heart; but in this her Griefs were too poignant to admit of Eaſe that way. Though ſhe was ready to burſt, yet ſhe could not ſhed a Tear; but, in ſilent unutterable Languiſh, got up from her Chair, and began to put on her Cloak and Cap; and the Bailiff ordered one of his Followers to go and call a Coach to the Door, as he would not, he ſaid,

ſaid, have the Lady expoſed in the Street. While they ſtood waiting for the Coach, Mrs. *Maſſey* came up, and pretended to be all over in a Tremble with the Fright of Bailiffs coming to her Houſe, and even ſhed ſome Crocodile Tears in bewailing Miſs's hard Fate. Miſs who now ſaw her Baſeneſs, and judged rightly that ſhe and her Friend in the *Strand* were in Combination againſt her for ſome End ſhe had not formed any Idea of, took no Notice, but looked at her as ſhe ſtepped into the Coach with the utmoſt Contempt.

It is with Pain I lead the good-natured Reader to this Scene of Sorrow; the Horror of a Spunging-Houſe to a young Creature bred in great Delicacy muſt eaſily occur to the Imagination without any Deſcription. Let it ſuffice then to ſay, that her Woes were now ſuch as could admit of no Addition, and ſat ſo viſible in her once lovely Countenance, that even the Beaſts of Prey that inhabited this Place of Miſery, felt ſome Part of her Anguiſh, abated of their natural Ferocity; and to alleviate her Grief as much as poſſible, treated her with more Tenderneſs than one could well expect from their brutal Diſpoſitions. They ſhewed her a Room and a good Fire, and finding ſhe

was not diſpoſed to be entertained by their Company, left her to contemplate her Miſfortunes.

Seeing herſelf alone, and the Door for the firſt Time lock'd upon her, ſhe fetch'd a deep Sigh on looking at a little Wicket there, thro' which they deſired her to call, if ſhe wanted any Thing; and then got ſome Relief by a Torrent of Tears. But raiſing herſelf at once, ſhe endeavoured to calm her Mind, and to recollect, if poſſible, if there were any Means in her Power to extricate herſelf; ſhe revolved in her Mind every Thing ſhe could think, that had the moſt remote Appearance that Way; but after near two Hours ſpent in calm Deliberation, returned to where ſhe ſet out, to a Spunging-Houſe, without Money, or any one Friend on Earth, who would ſupply her with a Shilling, without paying a Price for it dearer by far than her Liberty. Relief then, ſays ſhe, is not to be compaſſed by human Prudence, it is from thee, Oh! Moſt High! I muſt expect it; if there is yet any innocent Miſery greater than that I feel, and that thou haſt ordained it to be my Lot, I am ſure thy Aid will enable me to ſupport it, or in thy Mercy cut my Thread of Life, and put a Period to Woes too heavy for weak

weak Woman to bear. If I muſt go to a Jail, and that it is worſe there, then Providence will find me, if not Relief, at leaſt Support; or Death, the End of all Sorrows, muſt ſoon put an End to my Miſery. With this philoſophical Reflection, the fair Mourner, weak for Want of Reſt, as ſhe had ſlept none the two or three preceeding Nights, threw herſelf on the Bed and fell faſt aſleep, till towards Evening, when the Bailiff's Wife came up and aſked her if ſhe would eat any thing, ſhe told her ſhe would try to eat ſomething; but muſt know the Charge firſt, leſt ſhe had not Money to pay for it, for ſhe had but a Shilling and a few Half-pence in her Pocket. The Woman, tho' uſed to Diſtreſſes of all Kinds, yet was moved at her Condition, and told her that what ſhe ſhould bring her would coſt her nothing; ſhe was welcome to any thing in her Houſe without a Farthing. By no Means, replied Miſs, forgive me if I decline it; for by juſt ſuch friendly Offers have I been betrayed into this Place. It may be ſo, returned the Hoſteſs, I have heard as much; but we are not all alike, I would not do ſuch an Action for a King's Ranſom. She went down and brought her up a broil'd Chicken and a Pint of Wine, made her eat ſome of it and drink a Glaſs or two of Wine; put clean Sheets

on the Bed, warm'd it and ſaw her into it before ſhe left her, begging her not to be caſt down, that it was the Lot of many honeſt People to be in Trouble, out of which ſhe needed not deſpair of being relieved. I have ſeen, ſaid ſhe, many a one come in here ſad and ſorrowful, and go out again with a merry Heart, I wiſh it may be your Caſe; and wiſhed her good Night.

The Reſt ſhe had got in the Day, and the Reſolution ſhe had formed to herſelf to ſubmit patiently to all that could happen to her, and the plain honeſt heartning given her by the Bailiff's Wife, made her paſs the Night in greater Tranquillity than might be expected, and ſhe was now ſo reſigned that ſhe wiſhed only for next Day, when ſhe was told ſhe was to be carried to the *King's-Bench* Priſon, that ſhe might know the worſt of her Fate, and have nothing more to dread.

Early next Morning the Bailiff's Wife brought her down from her Cell to breakfaſt in the Parlour, which they had but juſt finiſhed when her Plaintiff, the Linnen-Draper and Mrs. *Maſſey* came in; they both appeared very facetious, and treated her with great Reſpect, which ſhe returned with very

very cold Civility. The Plaintiff asked her if ſhe had thought of any Means to diſcharge the Debt, for that ſhe ſhould be ſorry to be obliged to ſend ſo young a Creature to Jail. On her telling her that ſhe had not, but that ſhe was ready to ſubmit to the worſt the Malice of her Stars could inflict on her. Well then, ſays ſhe, pulling a Letter out of her Pocket, in Spight of your Obſtinacy I am reſolved to ſerve you; you ſhall find me ſtill your Friend, and that what has happened has turned out as it was really deſigned, for your Good. Here, added ſhe, giving her a Letter directed with a Woman's Hand, read that, and give me your Anſwer; but don't be raſh in it, for it is the Criſis of your Fate; now or never you may be happy.

Miſs took the Letter and opened it with great Emotion, but was quite confounded when ſhe ſaw it was from her amorous Stateſman. The Contents of it ran thus.

MADAM,

AFTER the repeated Inſults you have offered my Letters by returning them unopened or unanſwered, you had no Reaſon to expect I ſhould trouble myſelf in your Affairs, but there is ſomething ſtill within me that pleads

for you and compels me once more to make an Effort upon your Obſtinacy.

I have been informed of your Situation, which I am heartily ſorry for, and have given Orders for your immediate Releaſe on Condition you accept of the Settlement I formerly offered you of five Hundred a Year, which is likewiſe ready to be delivered you on your giving the leaſt Acknowledgment of your Willingneſs to oblige,

Madam,

Your Friend and

moſt humble Servant,

**** *****.

On reading this Letter Miſs's Eyes ſparkled with Rage, ſhe diſcovered at once what ſhe never before dream'd of, that the Linnen-Draper and Mrs. *Maſſey* were the Tools of this old Villain. Now the Source of their laviſh Friendſhip was diſcovered, and the Deſign of their preſent Perſecution was apparent. And is this, ſaid ſhe, throwing the Letter at Mrs. —— with great Indignation, the Amount of your good Offices! Is this the Method you propoſe for my Relief, thou Scandal to thy Sex and Diſgrace

to

to Modeſty! Are not you aſhamed at theſe Years to turn Bawd to Vice, and to ruin Virtue and Innocence? Go, tell the hoary Monſter your Employer, that I hate and deſpiſe his baſe Offers, and that my Virtue is above all the Temptations in the Wretch's Power. It is well I know to what I owe my Sufferings; know, baſe Woman, you can inflict nothing on me, tho' aſſiſted by all the Malice of that Devil you ſerve, but what I can ſubmit to with Chearfulneſs, ſince it is in the Support of my Innocence, which muſt give me Joy, when ſuch impious Wretches as you, are racked with endleſs Anguiſh and Remorſe.

And dare you brave me ſo, proud Minx, and give me the Name of Bawd? I ſcorn your Words, you baſe Slut you, muſt you not have ſtarved if I had not ſupported you with my Money? And did not this good Woman here reſcue you out of a rank Bawdy-Houſe? And yet you muſt give yourſelf Airs of Virtue forſooth, and ſcandalize honeſt People. Come, Sir, turning to the Bailiff, who was preſent all this while, take her to Priſon, here are your Fees. I will ſee the Baggage carried off before I ſtir, I'll teach her to give me Names, ſo I ſhall.

I believe, ſaid the Bailiff, who began to have a very high Opinion of his Priſoner, and but a deſpicable Notion of the Plaintiff, as he had heard all that paſs'd, and read the Letter which the Plaintiff in her Rage threw open, as Miſs gave it her upon the Table, that you had better diſcharge her; for, taking up the Letter and putting it in his Pocket, there is here as much as may pay your Debt, and teach you to dance from *Charing-Croſs* to the *Exchange*, to the Tune of a good Cat and Nine tails. I ſcorn your Words, you dirty, bumming Raſcal, I have Friends to ſtand by me that can puniſh twenty ſuch Raggamuffins as you for chattering. Do your Duty this Inſtant, refuſe it if you dare I ſay.

A Battle royal had like to have ſucceeded, in which it is probable the Bailiff might have had his Hands full to do between the Linnen-Draper and Mrs. *Maſſey*, who were no bad Hands at *Billingſgate*, and could bite and ſcratch tolerably well, but the Bailiff was called from the Combat by one who wanted him in the next Room. While he was abſent the Bailiff's Wife maintained the Fight with great Spirit, and now and then Miſs put in a Word or two, when ſhe could raiſe her Voice to a Key loud enough to be heard.

heard. The Women were louder than twenty Bells, when the Bailiff returned, and with an Air of Authority commanded Silence. Silence, you Puppy, ſays the enraged Plaintiff, muſt I employ you and pay you my Money for doing your Duty, and dare you inſult me thus? Come this Minute and carry that impudent Slut to Priſon, that I may have Satisfaction for my Money out of her proud Fleſh. Indeed but you ſhan't this Bout, ſays the Bailiff, for know to your utter Confuſion, the young Gentlewoman is this Minute diſcharged. I have the Money in my Pocket, and five Guineas over to give her; here it is, chinking the Guineas, therefore get out of my Houſe this Inſtant, and ſend your Attorney and he ſhall have your Money. Away, be gone; no Words, I ſcorn to converſe with ſuch baſe B——ds as you are.

It is difficult to gueſs whether the Confuſion of the two Bawds, or the Joy of the relieved Fair was greateſt. Her Perſecutors left the Room murmuring Curſes between their Teeth, and ſhe was ſtruck with the ſudden and unexpected Turn of her Affairs, that the Tranſition was too quick for her Spirits, ſhe ſunk into a Chair unable to utter a Word. The Woman of the Houſe threw ſome Water

ter in her Face to recover her, and chid her Husband for being ſo blunt in telling her the good News. She came to herſelf in a few Minutes, and asked the Bailiff to what kind Angel ſhe owed her Deliverance; or was it only a Dream? He told her it was no Dream, but deſired her to compoſe herſelf a little, and then he would tell her all he knew.

CHAP. IX.

Containing the Manner of her being relieved out of the Spunging-Houſe; her recovering the Things ſtolen from her, and getting into the Service of a Lady of Diſtinction, where ſhe remained till ſhe was reſtored to the Rank due to her real Birth and Merit.

THE Bailiff was ſoon called out, and it was an Hour or two before he returned, to inform her of the Means of her Delivery, which you may believe according to the Meaſure of a Woman's Patience, was an Age to continue in Doubt. She had revolved in her Mind all poſſible Means by which Relief could come ſo critically to ſave her from the Horrors and Infamy of a Jail, but could not gueſs at the Source of this unexpected Bleſſing. At laſt the Bailiff returned,

turned, and ſhe begged him to put her out of her Pain, and tell to whom, next to God, ſhe ſhould return Thanks for the Benefits ſhe had received. That, replied the Bailiff, I really cannot tell if I would; I may gueſs at it, but I am not at Liberty to acquaint you even with my Thoughts. You muſt, continued he, be contented to know that the Houſe-keeper of a Lady of Quality, as ſhe called herſelf, juſt as you and the Plaintiff were in Diſpute, came into the Kitchen and overheard Part of your Dialect, and then called me out and put a Purſe into my Hands, with which ſhe ordered me to diſcharge your Debt, Charges here and Coſts, and to give the Remainder to you, with a Charge not to make Enquiries from whence it came, but to be ſatisfied that it was the free Gift of one who partly knew your Worth, and admired your Conſtancy. I ſhewed her the Letter that was brought you, which you know I put in my Pocket; ſhe begged it of me for an Hour, I have had it returned ſince, with ten Guineas more, and a Charge to ſee you ſettled in private Lodgings, and to give you all the Aſſiſtance in my Power. This is all, Madam, I know, and here is the fifteen Guineas, of which you muſt not lay out one Penny in my Houſe, for I am generouſly

paid

paid for what I have done, and yet I hope to do more.

Miſs was obliged to be ſatisfied with this Account, and bleſſed God, who had ſo wonderfully relieved her, when all Proſpect of Hope was loſt. The Bailiff asked ſome Queſtions about the Manner the Debt was contracted, and ſhe had no ſooner given him a Detail of the Robbery, and the Name of the Lawyer employed, than he ſaid he ſmelt a Rat, and that it would coſt him a Fall if he did not make the Bitch return all ſhe had got, and recover her Things beſides; and deſired her not to trouble her Head about it, what he did ſhould coſt her Nothing; but he had great Hopes of ſucceeding, as he knew the Lawyer and all his Tricks, and had him in a cloſe Net, ſo that he dare conceal nothing from him.

It was now Dinner Time, and they dined pretty chearfully, and afterwards the Bailiff's Wife went out and took a very decent Lodging in a private Family, for whoſe Honeſty ſhe would pledge her Life, ſent for her Things from Mrs. *Maſſey*'s, and ſaw her ſafe to her new Habitation.

Next Day her Cogitations turned upon the Manner ſhe ſhould employ herſelf, ſhe thought to think of Service without any Perſon to recommend her but a Bailiff's Wife, would be impracticable; and that the little Money Providence had ſent her would in time be exhauſted, ſhe therefore determined, till ſomething ſhould caſt up that would be better for her, to employ herſelf in Embroidery, in which ſhe was very expert, and hoped, by embroidering ſhort Aprons, then much worn by the Ladies, and diſpoſing of them, ſhe might make ſhift to ſubſiſt herſelf. She immediately bought ſome Materials for that Purpoſe, and by Afternoon that the Bailiff's Wife came to ſee her, was fully employed in this new Occupation. The honeſt Woman approved her Induſtry, and promiſed to aſſiſt her in diſpoſing of her Work.

A Week or two paſſed in great Peace and Tranquillity, the Family ſhe was in treated her with great Reſpect, ſhe kept much at home, and ſaw nobody but the Bailiff's Wife who now and then paid her a Viſit, and was ſo diſcreet as not to expect a Return. She had not ſeen the Bailiff ſince ſhe left his Houſe; he now came to pay her a Viſit, and,

and, as politely as he could, begged Pardon for the Freedom he had taken, as it was purely to ſerve her. I have, Madam, ſays he, got Scent of the Thief that robb'd you, and before Night I expect to have her in Cuſtody; for you muſt know, Madam, I ſqueezed the whole Secret out of the Lawyer, and it ſtands thus. The Things were only moved out of your Room, by the Maid, into Mrs. *Maſſey*'s, by her own Orders, and the Maid was made to abſcond on purpoſe to cover the Suſpicion from themſelves; and the Fuſs about apprehending the Girl *Clara* was only to blind you, and that they might have an Opportunity to run you in Debt, for what Purpoſe it is eaſy now to gueſs at. All this I picked out of the Lawyer, who is under my Thumb, as I will tell you. He has ſtill the Warrant taken out, in your Name, againſt *Clara*, knows where ſhe is, and I am to have her in Limbo preſently; I warrant we make her ſqueak, and then I ſhall trounce both the B—h—t—s; and ſince my Hand is in, I'll have a Touch at the old Stateſman, and make him come down handſomely. I thought this would be good News to you, and come to acquaint you with it, but be aſſured you ſhall not be ſeen in the Matter, ſo don't fret yourſelf; but the next time you ſee me,

expect

expect your Things and all the Money they extorted from you. Miſs thanked the Officer for his obliging Zeal, and he left her, to proſecute his Plan, in which he ſucceeded to his Wiſh, for in two Days after, he returned with every the leaſt thing that had been taken from her, about Thirty Guineas that was in the Trunk, and forty-five Pounds as the Debt and Coſts, paid at his own Houſe, all which, he ſaid, with a handſome Preſent for Huſh-Money for his own Uſe, he had received from the Squire; for the Moment I had *Clara* faſt, continued he, ſhe told the Truth in an Inſtant, and that both Mrs. ——— in the *Strand* and Mrs. *Maſſey* were concerned; I got a Warrant for them both, and had them nabbed. They gave me a Letter to his Honour, which I delivered out of my own Hands, and gave him ſome broad Hints that I knew how to handle Somebody. He underſtood me, paid me my Demands generouſly, and you ſee here the Money; but I am in Haſte, I muſt leave you, and receive your Thanks another time.

She was now as rich as a Jew, and was only under Apprehenſion of being rob'd; but her Fears on that Head did not laſt long, for in two or three Days the Officer's Wife came

came and told her, that the Lady's Houſe-keeper who had relieved her, had been to enquire how ſhe went on; I told her, added ſhe, that you did very well, and was buſy at embroidering an Apron which you deſign'd to diſpoſe of; and that I heard you ſay it would be ſoon done. She ſeemed mightily pleaſed, and deſired to have a Sight of it when it was finiſhed, for that perhaps ſhe could help you to the Sale of it; and I am to give her an Anſwer this Day. Miſs was overjoyed that her Benefactreſs ſhould know that ſhe employed herſelf profitably, gave the Woman the Apron which was juſt finiſhed, and heard no more of it for two Days, when a Coach ſtopped at the Door, and an elderly looking Woman in it who aſked for Miſs *Dickens*. She was ſhewed up to her Room, and found her at work on another Apron.

I am come, Madam, ſays the Houſe-keeper, for it was ſhe, from Mrs. *Morgan*, to whom I ſhew'd an Apron of your working. My Lady is highly pleaſed with it, and has ſent me with the Coach to deſire that ſhe might ſpeak with you about it. I believe, Madam, replied Miſs, with the Tear of Gratitude ſtarting into her Eye, I am too much obliged to that Lady's

Bounty

Bounty not to think it the greateſt Happineſs to have an Opportunity of expreſſing my Senſe of her Favours.

She was quickly dreſſed and went with the Houſekeeper into the Coach, and ſoon arrived at Mrs. *Morgan*'s, whoſe Houſe was but two or three Streets off, and was immediately introduced to that Lady's Bed-Chamber, who received her with all the Marks of Eſteem and Tenderneſs. Miſs's Boſom was ſo full on the Sight of a Lady who had done her ſo ſignal a Service, that ſhe was ſcarce able to utter the grateful Sentiments of her overflowing Heart; but the good Lady interrupted her in the Compliment ſhe ſaw ſhe was about to make her. You need not, my dear Child, give me any Thanks for what I have done for you. I am ſenſible I have obliged a Perſon worthy of my Eſteem, whoſe Merit and Suffering in the Cauſe of Innocence and Virtue, deſerves the Regard of every honeſt Heart; your Acknowledgments are due to Heaven, and not to me, whoſe Inſtrument I only am, to ſuccour thoſe whom it deſigns to protect from Violence and Oppreſſion. And after making her ſit down by her, ſhe continued, It is not enough, Child, that I have releaſed you from the Difficulties that lately oppreſſed

preſſed you, I want to ſee you ſettled out of the Reach of ſuch Misfortunes for the future. And for that Reaſon have ſent for you, to know how you mean to diſpoſe of yourſelf for the time to come. I have ſeen the Apron you embroidered, I am highly pleaſed with it, it ſhows you are of an induſtrious Diſpoſition, and that you have had a good Education; but I would not have you think of depending on that for a Support. Young Women who live by themſelves, and truſt wholly to their own Prudence, rarely eſcape the many Dangers to which their Youth and Want of Experience expoſe them. It was not my Intention, Madam, when I came to *London*, replied Miſs, to live in that Manner; I depended on the Recommendation of a Lady who expreſſed ſome Friendſhip for me to have got into the Service of ſome Lady, under whoſe Protection I might have lived in Safety, but the Lady to whom ſhe recommended me is gone abroad, and ſomehow by the unhappy Affair in the laſt Houſe but one I lodged at, I have loſt that Lady's Friendſhip, and can hear no more from her; ſo that I only employed myſelf in Embroidery till Providence ſhould raiſe me up another Friend to recommend me to a proper Service, which I am ſenſible would be much better for me than living as I do.

It

It is well, Child, replied Mrs. *Morgan*, that you are of that Opinion; I find I am not deceived in the Notion I had formed of your good Senſe, and therefore, if you approve of it, I intend to take you into my own Service, to be about my own Perſon. Madam, returned Miſs, with her Face glowing with Joy, if you are ſo condeſcending as to accept of a Stranger, without any Perſon to recommend her to your Notice, I ſhall think it my greateſt Felicity to endeavour, by a faithful Diſcharge of my Duty, to merit the Confidence you place in me, and think my whole Life too ſhort to diſcharge the great Obligations I owe your Goodneſs. It is enough, *Sally*, you need no other Recommendation to me than what I have had, for, not to keep you longer in Suſpence, I muſt inform you how I come to intereſt myſelf in your Affairs.

I heard all that Part of your Hiſtory that took its Riſe at Mrs. *Weller*'s, the firſt Houſe you lodged at after coming to Town, from my Nephew Captain *Price*. You need not bluſh Child at his Name, that Tranſaction has done you Honour, and I hope has cured him of ſome faſhionable Liberties, as your Letter to him gave him ſo high an Opinion of your Virtue and Spirit that it

was impoſſible for a Man to feel greater Compunction than he did for the Inſult he had offered you. You had not been long at Mrs. *Maſſey*'s when Overtures were made him by that baſe, diſſembling Woman, that he might have Opportunities, if he intended to purſue his Deſigns upon you, but he abhorred the Thought, and was in the utmoſt Pain to find you in ſuch Hands, and was meditating Means to apprize you of your Danger, when he heard by Accident of your being arreſted. He judged your Delicacy would refuſe all Aid that come directly from him, but no Time was to be loſt to ſerve you, therefore he came to me, and told the whole Affair, ſhewed me your Letter, and the Circumſtances you were then in, and conjured me to take Means for your Relief.

I was eaſily perſuaded to do an Action that carried its own Reward along with it, to ſuccour the innocently diſtreſſed. I ſent my Houſekeeper with the Money, who on her Return, by ſhewing me the Letter wrote you by that old Villain, and reporting the Dialogue you had with his Agents, gave me ſtill greater Reaſon to think my good Offices properly employed. Thus my Dear, as far as concerned your Conduct ſince you came to *London*, I was perfectly well pleaſed, and

and had nothing to reproach you with, but every thing to praiſe; but before I gave you any further Countenance I wanted to reſolve myſelf as to the Cauſe of your coming to Town in Search of Service, as Captain *Price* made me believe, your Carriage and Appearance ſpoke you of a Rank above that Station of Life. He had heard from the People of the Houſe, that you had often mentioned my Siſter Mrs. *Worthy*, I wrote to her your Hiſtory ſo ſoon as you were releaſed; ſhe regretted your Misfortune, deſired me in the ſtrongeſt Terms to take you under my Protection, for that your Character in that Country merited the Regard of every Perſon of Virtue and Honour, but that there was ſomething in your Hiſtory ſhe was not at Liberty to mention, even to me, without your own Conſent, which ſhe hoped to obtain, ſo ſoon as ſhe came to Town, which will be in a few Weeks. I can deny nothing to my Siſter *Worthy*, but aſſure yourſelf that greateſt Part of the Friendſhip I find myſelf inclined to have for you is owing to your own Worth. I would not have you, when you come into my Service look upon me with the Severity of a Miſtreſs, but as one who has the Regard of a Friend and the Tenderneſs of a Mother for you; your Buſineſs is only about myſelf,

and I do not want much Attendance; my Daughters are grown up, to whom you are to be a Companion, and I wiſh they may learn from you, to prize Virtue above all earthly Happineſs. But by the bye, I muſt pay you for your firſt Work, which I have ſent down to Siſter *Worthy*, who ſays ſhe prizes it above all the Cloaths ſhe has. I muſt give you a great Price for it, according to the Eſteem ſhe has for it. Miſs was going to ſay ſomething about taking no Money for it, but Mrs. *Morgan* ſtopped her ſhort, and inſiſted upon her taking ten Guineas, if not as the Value of the Apron, at leaſt as Earneſt to her Service, to which ſhe expected ſhe would come home that Afternoon, and then called the Houſekeeper and deſired her to go home with Miſs, and take along with her ſome of the Servants to bring her Things, for that ſhe was hired in *Oſborn*'s Place.

The old Houſekeeper ſeemed very well pleaſed with the News, and was very officious in aſſiſting her to pack up and remove her little Effects, ſo that in a few Hours ſhe ſaw herſelf in the Situation ſhe ſo much longed for, under the Protection of a Lady of Honour and Reputation, and what made

it

it ſtill more agreeable too, the Siſter of the amiable Mrs. *Worthy*.

She found the moſt reſpectful Treatment from the Servants, and her Miſtreſs made very little Diſtinction between her and her Daughters. She was conſtantly with her as a Companion, and dined with her when there were no Company but her own Family, and the young Ladies grew extremely fond of her, and treated her in every Reſpect as their Equal; ſo that ſhe had nothing in Effect but the Name of Servitude to make her uneaſy, which ſhe had too much good Senſe to quarrel with.

In leſs than ſix Weeks Mrs. *Worthy* came up to Town, who was not half ſo overjoyed to ſee her Siſter as to ſee Miſs *Sally Dickens*, which Name ſhe ſtill retained; with Miſs's own Conſent Mrs. *Worthy* let her Siſter into that Part of her Hiſtory which related to her leaving Lady *Bountiful*, which gave Mrs. *Morgan* ſo high an Opinion of her that tho' ſhe had treated her with great Reſpect hitherto, yet ſhe made her an Apology that ſhe had not treated her with more; and from that Time ſhe became Lady *Bountiful* to her in every Reſpect, putting her intirely

off the footing of a Servant, and uſed her as an intimate and much-loved Friend.

Mrs. *Worthy* likewiſe acquainted Miſs with the Situation of Lady *Bountiful*'s Family: That Sir *Thomas*, after going home that time from her Houſe, had fretted himſelf into a Fever, of which he had like to have died; and that on his Recovery, he and Dr. *Burton* had ſet out on his Travels, and that he had ſworn ſolemnly to his Mother, at parting, that he never would return to *England* while ſhe lived, or till ſhe gave her Conſent to his Marriage with Miſs *Summers*, if ever ſhe ſhould be found. She added, that the old Lady whom ſhe had ſeen ſince ſhe left the Country, never mentioned her but with the utmoſt Regard and Tenderneſs, and the higheſt Encomiums on your Fortitude and Gratitude to her, but complains that you did not let her know of your Retreat, that ſhe might have afforded you all neceſſary Support; but that ſhe had taken care of you in her Will, by which I heard ſay ſhe had left you two thouſand Pounds.

Miſs was tenderly affected with this Account of that worthy Family, and often lamented that ſhe ſhould be the innocent Cauſe

Cauſe of ſo much Uneaſineſs to that good Lady, as ſhe knew ſhe muſt ſuffer on Account of the Abſence of her much loved Son. This was the only Thought that gave her any Uneaſineſs for near three Years that ſhe remained in Mrs. *Morgan*'s Family; but as a dead Calm enſued for ſo long a Time, and that nothing happened in that Period worthy of Heed or Attention, I ſhall cloſe this Chapter, that they may have an Opportunity, by the Help of the little white Space, to ſuppoſe here three Years elapſed, without hearing one Word from the pretty Pariſh Girl

CHAP. X.

Containing an Account how Miſs Summers *meets with her Father after ſo long an Abſence, and is reſtored to the Rank due to her Birth.*

WHEN Miſs had been about two Years and nine Months in Mrs. *Morgan*'s Family, one Morning after Breakfaſt Mrs. *Morgan*'s Lawyer came to wait of her, in Company with one Captain *Ainſworth*, a Gentleman who had purchaſed an Eſtate, on which that Lady had a Mortgage of ten thouſand Pounds; they came to

treat with her about the Redemption. Miſs was in the Room when they came in, and found herſelf ſeized with an unaccountable Fluttering of Spirits, as ſoon as ſhe ſet Eyes on Captain *Ainſworth*. He looked on her with great Attention, with a certain Air of Melancholy in his Face, and ſeemed in ſo much Confuſion, that he was ſcarce able to make any Return to the Compliment Mrs. *Morgan* made him on his firſt Entrance. Miſs underſtanding they had Buſineſs, got up to quit the Room, but on hearing the Gentleman's Voice ſhe ſunk back in her Chair. Mrs. *Morgan* ran to her crying out, good God! my dear Miſs *Dickens*, what is the Matter with you? She could make no Reply; the Servants were called, and a Surgeon ſent for immediately to let her Blood, and every one were in the utmoſt Concern for her Health, and amazed at ſo ſudden a Change; but none ſeemed more touched than Captain *Ainſworth*, who ſaid he found himſelf more affected with the Sight of her than any thing that had happened to him ſince he came to *England*; for, added he, with a deep Sigh, that young Creature has ſo great a Reſemblance to a much loved Child, and much deſerving Wife, that on the Sight of her every tender Idea of them occurred to my Memory, and

every

every tormenting Circumſtance that aggravates my infinite Loſs.

Miſs was immediately removed to her Chamber, and Mrs. *Morgan* was under ſo much Concern that the Gentlemen in good Manners were obliged to defer their Buſineſs for that Time, and took their Leave. Miſs, on being let Blood, came ſoon to her ſelf, and on being asked what ſhe thought could be the Cauſe of that ſudden Illneſs, ſhe ſaid, on the firſt Sight of that Gentleman, whom ſhe heard the Attorney call Captain *Ainſworth*, ſhe found herſelf ſtrongly diſordered, and thought ſhe ſaw in his Face, and obſerved in his Voice ſomething that moved her with the greateſt Tenderneſs, which flowed ſo faſt upon her Spirits, in a Mixture of unaccountable Joy and Grief, that ſhe ſunk under it. The Thing appeared prodigiouſly ſtrange to Mrs. *Morgan*, eſpecially when ſhe reflected, which ſhe had not till then, on what the Captain ſaid, in regard to what he felt. The more ſhe thought of it, the leſs ſhe was capable of accounting for ſo odd an Accident, and was obliged to refer it, to ſome of thoſe myſterious Occurrences too deep for human Search.

In the Afternoon, while Miſs ſtill kept her Chamber, the Attorney returned to Mrs. *Morgan* to enquire, at the Deſire of Captain *Ainſworth*, concerning the young Lady's Health, and when Mrs. *Morgan* would be pleaſed to appoint a Meeting to treat about the Mortgage, which the Captain was anxious to have redeemed. The Converſation turned upon the Oddneſs of of Miſs's Diſorder. Mrs. *Morgan* acquainted the Attorney with what ſhe had told her about the Cauſe of it.

It appears to me, ſaid the Lawyer, to be a very ſtrange Circumſtance, that two Perſons ſhould be ſo equally affected with the Sight of each other, and if I were not ſure that it is a Thing impoſſible, I ſhould almoſt believe this young Lady to be that Daughter, for whoſe Loſs the Captain is ſo much afflicted. A Daughter, replied Mrs. *Morgan* in amaze, for Heaven's Sake explain yourſelf, has he loſt a Daughter? Pray tell me how? methinks I am on the Rack till I hear it. The Attorney was aſtoniſhed to hear her talk ſo, but obſerving her Anxiety to be informed both in her Words and Countenance, he went on thus, without any Preamble.

You'll

You'll be pleaſed to know, Madam, that the Gentleman I had the Honour of introducing this Morning, by the Name of Captain *Ainſworth*, is Brother to the Lord Viſcount ———, and his real Name Captain *Robert Summers*. — Good Heavens, cried Mrs. *Morgan*, in a Tranſport, how wonderful are thy Ways! and how much beyond the Reach of human Underſtanding; but I beg Pardon, Sir, for interrupting you. Go on, Sir, you ſay his real Name is Captain *Robert Summers*. Yes, Madam, replied the Attorney, ſtill more aſtoniſhed, it is. He had a very genteel Patrimony, and a Captain's Commiſſion in the Army, when a young Man, but he ſoon, by faſt Living, run out his Fortune, and was obliged to ſell his Commiſſion. He married a Daughter of that worthy Prelate the Biſhop of ——, with whom he had a genteel Fortune, which he likewiſe ſpent; and what bears hardeſt upon his Spirits is, that he proved a very baſe Husband (I uſe his own Words) to one of the beſt of Wives, and left her and an only Daughter to ſtruggle with Want and Miſery.

After he had reduced himſelf and his Wife to the loweſt Ebb of Wretchedneſs,

he procured a Commiſſion in the *Eaſt-India* Company's Service, and went abroad to *Bencoolen*, one of their Settlements, but as the Commiſſion was beneath what he had bore in his Majeſty's Service, and, as he thought, derogatory his Birth, had the Precaution to take from it by the Name of *Ainſworth*. He has been abroad for ſeveral Years, and returned about a Twelvemonth ago in very opulent Circumſtances; at leaſt worth one Hundred thouſand Pounds in Specie, beſides Jewels, and other Eaſtern Curioſities to a great Value.

On his Arrival, his firſt Care was to ſearch out for his Wife and Child, to whoſe Merit, Time, Reflection and riper Years had opened his Eyes, but it was too late; on Enquiry, he had the Mortification to know that his Lady died oppreſſed with Want, and the Reſentment of his cruel Uſage, a Year or two after he left *England*; and that his only Child, Heireſs of his vaſt Fortune, and to the Eſtate and Title of his Brother, after his Deceaſe, the Title paſſing to Heirs Male and Female, was ſent to the Pariſh; from whence ſhe was taken by ſome unknown Perſon, and has not ſince been heard of, notwithſtanding he has laid out large Sums ſince he came home to get Intelligence of her. It is this, Madam, that

ſours

ſours all the unhappy Gentleman's Enjoyments, and makes him wear that Face of Melancholy in the Midſt of the greateſt earthly Proſperity, and every the leaſt Circumſtance which brings his Misfortunes to his Memory, afflicts him with the moſt profound Sorrow.

The Attorney was ſome Minutes ſilent before Mrs. *Morgan* could recover from her Wonder at the providential Diſcovery. You ſeem moved, Madam, at what I have ſaid, I hope you are no Ways intereſted in the Captain's Misfortune, that the Relation of them ſhould give you Pain. Oh! by no Means, replied ſhe, recovering herſelf, the Pleaſure you have given me in what you have told me is beyond Expreſſion. You have made me happy beyond Imagination, but there is another much more deſerving, whoſe Felicity your News muſt raiſe to the higheſt Pitch. It is too much for her to bear at once. I muſt be cautious how I ſurprize her. You ſeem amazed at my Behaviour, but when you know the Cauſe, your Amazement will ceaſe; not to keep you in Pain, the young Lady you ſaw this Morning is no other than Miſs *Charlotte Summers*, the Captain's much deſerving Daughter; but the Diſcovery to them both muſt be managed

managed with Prudence and Deliberation. The Attorney expreſſed his Aſtoniſhment at the unforeſeen Means by which Providence brings about its Purpoſes, and promiſed to follow Mrs. *Morgan*'s Advice in the Part ſhe ſhould allot him in the agreeable Diſcovery.

As they were conſulting together the propereſt Means to open the Affair to the Father and Daughter, Mrs. *Worthy* and her Huſband, who had been in Town for ſome Time paſt, came in. On the Sight of them, Mrs. *Morgan* could not contain her Joy, but told them the happy Diſcovery ſhe had made. Their Satisfaction was equal to hers, and all four began ſeriouſly to form a Plan for acquainting the Parties principally concerned in the unexpected Event. They agreed that leſs Preparation was neceſſary to the Father than the Daughter, and that it would be neceſſary to give him the full Evidence at once, that no doubt might remain upon his Mind as to the Identity of a Child that was to inherit ſo vaſt a Fortune; at laſt it was reſolved that nothing ſhould be ſaid of it to the Father, till Mrs. *Morgan* ſhould acquaint him, that they had prepared Miſs, and were ready to explain themſelves with Certainty to the Captain.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Worthy* undertook to manage the Diſcovery to Miſs *Summers*, which ſhe did in this Manner. The Accident of her Illneſs gave Riſe to the Company to talk of Sympathy of Blood, and how ſtrangely Nature operates in Diſcoveries of near Relations, eſpecially Parents and Children, and then Occaſion was taken to aſk Miſs if ſhe remembered her Father; ſhe ſaid ſhe had a faint Idea both of his Voice and Perſon, but ſo imperfect that ſhe was ſure, ſhe ſaid, with a Sigh, if he were alive and to meet him, I ſhould not know him, unleſs it were by that Sympathy you ſpeak of, which I fancy muſt be ſomething like that I felt on Sight of Captain *Ainſworth* this Morning, which ſhews, added ſhe, that we are not always to depend on theſe cauſeleſs Emotions of the Spirits, ſince I am ſure that Gentleman and I can no ways be related, though at firſt Sight I have uncommon Eſteem for him. It was difficult for the Company to contain themſelves; but Mrs. *Worthy* told her ſhe had no Reaſon to think that her Father was dead, tho' you have heard nothing of him ſince he went to the *Eaſt-Indies*. He may be alive and may come home as rich as a Jew; and now I think on't, Siſter, this Captain *Ainſworth* is lately come home from the *Eaſt-Indies*,

Indies, and ten to one but he may have heard ſomething of Captain *Summers*. It may be ſo, replied Mrs. *Morgan*, I ſhall aſk him the firſt time I ſee him, I cannot put it out of my Head, but he may help us to ſome Knowledge of him.

They went no further in this Converſation, but next Day Mr. *Worthy* told her at Dinner that he had ſeen Captain *Ainſworth* that Morning, and that he had juſt an Opportunity to ask him, there being Company with him, if he knew Captain *Summers*, and that he ſaid he knew no Man better, and was going to add ſomething more when he was called away. Joy danced in Miſs's Eyes, tho' he had been to her a cruel Father, yet ſo ſtrong is filial Affection in a virtuous Mind that ſhe felt Pleaſure unknown at the News of his being alive. In ſhort, they were ſo tender of her Health, that it was three Days before they hinted any more of him, and then told her that he was alive in great Proſperity, and expected in the River almoſt every Tide; and that Captain *Ainſworth* was prepared to acquaint him with every Thing relating to her. Her Joy was now converted into Extacy, which was only kept within Bounds by her Anxiety for his Arrival, and they thought her

her now ſo well prepared that it was Time to afford both Father and Daughter that Felicity they promiſed themſelves in the Society of each other.

Mrs. *Morgan* gave Notice to the Attorney to bring Captain *Ainſworth* to her Houſe as next Afternoon, on Pretence of the Mortgage, for that they were now prepared to make him happy in his Daughter, but that he muſt mention no more to him, but caſually as they were on their Way to ſay that he had met with one, who gave him ſome hopes of diſcovering his Daughter, but that it would take up two or three Weeks. This was deſigned to give a little Briſkneſs to his Spirits, and turn his Mind upon that Subject.

When they underſtood he was at Hand, a Pretence was found to ſend Miſs out of the Room on ſome Buſineſs, that ſhould employ her till they had Occaſion for her. She had no Suſpicion of what they were about, and was glad of getting away that ſhe might have ſome Chat with Mrs. *Bell*, her former Maid, who had been ſo uſeful in explaining her Birth to Lady *Bountiful*, whom Mr. *Worthy* had fiſhed out for this Occaſion, and inſtructed her to call for Miſs,

Miſs, as if ſhe had found her out by Accident, and how to behave when called upon before Captain *Summers*.

As ſoon as the Company were ſeated and mutual Compliments paſſed, Mrs. *Worthy* aſked the Captain, if he knew one Captain *Dickens*, in the Service of the *Eaſt India* Company. He ſaid he had never heard of him. Its ſtrange, replied ſhe, I'm ſure that Gentleman muſt be ſomewhere in the *Eaſt Indies*, and yet I have aſked a hundred that has been there, and nobody knows any Thing of him. He is a ſtrange Man, if he is alive, that he does not take notice of a virtuous young Lady his Daughter, whoſe Virtue, Beauty and Merit, would make a crown'd Head proud of ſuch a Child, and yet that Man has not vouchſafed her the leaſt Aſſiſtance for near twenty Years; but its poſſible Sir, if I tell you ſome Part of his Hiſtory, that you may recollect him, for I am really greatly concerned to find him out.

Tho' the Mention of a Daughter in ſuch Circumſtances, gave the Captain great Compunction, yet his Complaiſance to the Lady who ſpoke, obliged him to promiſe all Attention to what ſhe was going to ſay, and Mrs. *Worthy* went on thus:

The

The Gentleman, whoſe Name is Mr. *Dickens*, was bred in his younger Days to the Army, and had a very genteel Patrimony of his own, and got a very handſome Fortune, by a fine young Lady, who married him contrary to the Advice of all her Relations; but all this was ſpent in the faſhionable Vices of the Age, and he proved an exceeding bad Huſband to a Woman, who was a Pattern of Conjugal Love and Fidelity. When he had ſtripped her of all ſhe had, he went for the *Eaſt Indies*, leaving her and an only Daughter to ſtruggle with every Degree of Wretchedneſs, which ſoon put an end to the unhappy Mother, who had ſcarce wherewithall to bury her, and the dear Infant was ſent to the Pariſh. At this the Tears ſtarted into the Captain's Eyes. Go on Madam, I find there are others as wretched as I am.

Mrs. *Worthy* continued her Diſcourſe, and, not to tire the Reader, made a ſhort but lively and pathetic Relation of all the Viciſſitudes of Miſs's Fortune, only ſubſtituting feigned Names, and dwelt with particular Emphaſis on all her Sufferings, and the noble Fortitude ſhe had diſplayed in every diſmal Change of her Fortune.

And

And when ſhe had done, and ſaw the Captain buried in the moſt profound Melancholly, don't you imagine Sir, continued ſhe, that this unhappy young Creature deſerved a better Fate, and that her Father is ſtrangely infatuated, that he makes no Enquiry after her.

After a conſiderable Pauſe, occaſioned by the Sorrow that oppreſſed him, the Captain replied, Yes Madam, ſuch Virtue as you have related, deſerves a better Father. But oh, Madam, did you know, what I feel from the affecting Narrative, you muſt think me the moſt wretched Man alive; for bating Names, Madam, you have given my Hiſtory, and repreſented to me all the Follies of my Youth, and given me a lively Image of the Miſeries of old Age: For what can I expect, who had a Wife beyond what you have deſcribed Mrs. *Dickens*, who uſed her brutally, and left her and her Infant to the very Fate you have allotted the Lady you have been ſpeaking of. But Mr. *Dickens* may ſtill be happy if he is alive, he may find a Daughter an honour to him and her Sex, but that Comfort is denied me, my Child is not to be heard of, and whatever is her Fate, it is only I am to blame.

The

The whole Company pitied the Agony he was in, and haſtened to relieve him. Pray Sir, ſays Mrs. *Morgan*, could you know your Daughter? I have Madam, an Idea of her Mother ſo ſtrongly in my Mind, whom ſhe reſembled when an Infant, that unleſs her Features are ſtrangely altered, I think I ſhould know her; but that Reſemblance deceived me in the young Lady I ſaw here ſome Days ago, ſo that I dare not truſt my Senſes. Yet ſure my Soul longs for her with ſuch Earneſtneſs, that Sympathy muſt direct me to my Child if I ſaw her: But why that Queſtion Madam? only a fooliſh Curioſity, replied the other, and rung the Bell for one of the Servants, whom ſhe whiſpered to deſire Mrs. *Bell* to come in, as if to deliver her ſome Meſſage.

Mrs. *Bell* came in, and in paſſing to Mrs. *Morgan*, ſtopped full before the Captain, Good Heavens! ſaid ſhe, what do I ſee! My dear Maſter, Captain *Summers!* Don't you know *Bell*, your Lady's Maid? Know ye! Yes I do, oh bleſſed Fortune, this cannot be Chance, it muſt be Providence, that has directed me to the only Perſon next to my Daughter, I wanted to ſee. Forgive this Rapture Ladies, my Caſe admits no Ceremony. Oh tell me, dear *Bell*, at once, do

do you know where my Child *Charlotte* is? Speak quickly and make a Father happy! Compoſe yourſelf, Sir, replied the other, I do know, and you ſhall ſoon ſee her. Oh! where *Bell?* Don't torture me with Delay, if you knew the Agonies I feel, with what Eagerneſs I burn to embrace that dear Pledge of my youthful Felicity, you would ſpeak me into Happineſs at once.

Go Mrs. *Bell*, and deſire Miſs to come down, tell her ſhe is to hear ſome News of her Father. Be calm Sir, the young Lady you ſaw here t'other Day, is your virtuous Child. Excuſe us, that we have kept you in Suſpence, we thought it neceſſary for both your Safeties. Here the dear Creature comes.

The Captain ſtarting from his Chair, as ſhe entered the Room, with wild Amazement in his Looks, running to her, and catching her in his Arms; Yes! it is ſhe! it is my dear, my loſt Child! embracing and gazing at her by turns, the Mother's Face, her Air, her Mien, and very Looks. Oh Heavens! this is too much to bear, my Happineſs is too ſupream. The Life the Idol of my Soul, all my Hopes, and the Spring of all my Joys, at once in my Arms.

——But!

—But! What have I done? Oh ſhe faints. —Look up my *Charlotte*, its your repenting Father calls you, and only lives to receive Forgiveneſs of you, for all thoſe Miſeries, my Baſeneſs heaped on you, and that bleſſed Angel your Mother. She recovered, and clung about his Neck and bathed his Face with Tears, then recollecting herſelf, fell upon her Knees, oh Bleſs me Sir, and confirm my Happineſs, for tho' all is Myſtery and Wonder, yet my Blood confeſſes its dear Original, and my Heart tells me I behold my Father. He bleſſed her, raiſed her to his Arms, and it was ſometime before he could permit himſelf to reflect, that there was ſome Complaiſance owing to the Company. At laſt mutual Compliments, and ſincere Congratulations paſſed on all Hands, and the Myſtery of the Name of Captain *Ainſworth*, was explained to the overjoy'd Miſs *Summers*.

I won't take up the Reader's Time, or detain him unneceſſarily from what remains of the Hiſtory, by repeating the Compliments and Acknowledgments that paſſed between Captain *Summers*, Mrs. *Morgan*, and Mrs. *Worthy*, a Reader of any tolerable Share of good Nature, or common good Breeding, may ſuppoſe that nothing was forgot,

forgot, proper to be ſaid on ſuch an Occaſion.

The tranſacting of this intereſting Scene, took up moſt of the Evening, till Supper was ſerved up, and all this amiable Company, when it was time to part, joined in their Requeſt to Captain *Summers*, that he would permit Miſs to ſtay with them for ſome Days, which he the readier conſented to, as it was neceſſary to make ſome Preparations for her Reception at his own Houſe, which he had but lately fitted up without Hopes, that he ſhould have ſuch a Gueſt. But in about a Week, ſhe went Home to her indulgent Parent, who ſoon put her in an Equipage ſuitable to the Fortune ſhe had to expect.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Containing, what few could expect, viz. *an Account how Miſs* Summers, *after all her great Struggles in Defence of her Virtue, went at laſt openly to Bed to a Man.*

AFTER conducting my fair Pariſh Girl through various Diſtreſſes and Dangers, I have at laſt landed her ſafe at her Father's Houſe to the Enjoyment of the utmoſt Proſperity and Grandeur. I think I had beſt leave her there, ſince ſhe now enjoys as much as can poſſibly make a reaſonable Woman happy. Oh, Pox! ſays Widow *Lackit*, ſure you won't give over without marrying her? It's impoſſible ſhe can be happy without a Huſband. Beſides, it's contrary to all Rule to end a Hiſtory of this Kind, without marrying the Hero and Heroine. Plague! I would not give a Ruſh for it without a Wedding-night.——It's monſtrouſly hard, Widow, to pleaſe every body; and now the Pariſh Girl has grown a rich Heireſs, and followed by a Regiment of Feathers, Ribbons, Titles, Coronets and powder'd Toopees, ſhe has quite altered her Sentiments, and it's impoſſible for me to perſuade her to make her Election out of the Croud of Admirers that dance after her. I

have been offered ſome Thouſands for my Intereſt with her; but I ſcorn to turn Match-maker; and ſince both Mr. *Corbett* and I are already married, God help us, I had Thoughts of letting her take her Fling for a Year or two, till ſhe could have known her own Mind better; but ſince I find the Ladies are willing to have her quickly diſpatched out of the Way, that they may have ſome of her caſt-off Lovers, I muſt do my beſt to perſuade old Lady *Bountiful*, to let it be a Match between her and her Son Sir *Thomas*, of whom we have heard no News this Year or two.

About three Months after the Diſcovery mentioned in the preceding Chapter, Captain *Summers* and his lovely Daughter were in their Chariot paſſing through *Pall-Mall*, and were detained ſome Time by a Gentleman's Coach, who ſtopped to ſpeak to the Captain. In the Interim, a grave like Gentleman, very well dreſs'd, in paſſing over-againſt the Chariot, and caſting his Eyes on Miſs *Summers*, ſtopt ſhort, and gazed with great Marks of Surprize in his Countenance. Miſs obſerved him, and thought ſhe knew him by the ſhort Glimpſe ſhe had of him, for the Chariot drove off that Inſtant, and ſhe loſt Sight of him.

him. However, the Gentleman followed the Chariot with his Eye a good Way, and then took the firſt Hackney-Coach he met, and directed the Coachman to follow that Chariot wherever it went.

The Hackney was in Sight when the Captain ſtopped at his own Houſe, and the Gentleman when he came up, asked the Coachman, who was ſtill at the Door, who lived at that Houſe? The Servant told him one Captain *Summers*, and that he and his Daughter had juſt now gone in. He immediately knocked at the Door, and deſired to ſpeak with Miſs *Summers*, to whom he was immediately admitted. Her Father was in the Room, and was juſt going out, when Miſs in a Rapture cried, Dear Sir, this is Dr. *Burton!* ran to him, and embraced him with great Tenderneſs; and turning to her Father, this, Sir, is one of the deareſt Friends I have on Earth. You have heard me mention him; he is Steward to the good Lady *Bountiful.*—— Captain *Summers* received him with all poſſible Marks of Eſteem. Mutual Compliments paſſed. Miſs eagerly enquired after Lady *Bountiful* and her Family, of which the Doctor gave her the following Account.

I dare not mention, Madam, the Confuſion into which your Flight plunged our Family, leſt it ſhould give you Pain. The Event, however, was, that Sir *Thomas*, after deſpairing of finding you, went with an Intention to make the Tour of *Europe*, and at parting with his Mother made a ſolemn Vow never to return while ſhe lived, or till ſhe gave her Conſent for his Marriage with you, in caſe you ſhould be found out. The Parting was melancholy beyond Deſcription; and our Travels, for I accompanied Sir *Thomas*, was far from mitigating that Sorrow which haunted my Pupil, and in about two Years threw him into a Diſorder that had all the Symptoms of a Conſumption. I was much alarmed at his Situation, and made for *Liſbon* as faſt as poſſible, where I expected the Serenity of the Air would be of Service to him. I thought it my Duty to acquaint Lady *Bountiful* with the dangerous Situation of her Son's Health, which alarmed that tender Mother to ſo great a Degree, that ſhe herſelf arrived at *Liſbon* before I could poſſibly have Anſwers of the Letters ſent her. We had been then near three Months at *Liſbon*, without obſerving any Alteration in Sir *Thomas*, unleſs it were for the worſe. The Phyſicians declared, his Malady proceeded from ſome Uneaſineſs in his

his Mind, which neither Air nor Medicine could have any Effect upon, and in few Words desired us to prepare for the worst. Sir *Thomas* (as it would have been Cruelty to conceal his Danger) received the News with a Kind of Joy, which was surprizing in a Person of his Years, and seemed rather to court than avoid Death. But the good Lady his Mother was inconsolable; she certainly would have sunk under the Weight of her Sorrow, if the Desire she had of ministring to her darling Son while he lived, had not in some sort made her Agonies tolerable. She proposed to him returning to his own Country, in Hopes that his native Air might work a Change. But he told her, No, Madam, your Will and my Vows have barr'd me the Hopes of dying in the Mansion of my Forefathers, nor do I know if it is even proper to send my Bones there. ——It is easy to imagine the Effect this Answer had on the unhappy Lady. She quitted the Room, and cursed her Pride a thousand Times, which she said had undone her darling Son. I happened to go in just as she was in this melancholy Situation, and told her perhaps it was not yet too late to rectify an Error that had its Foundation in her Regard to her Son's Honour, by promising to consent to a Marriage which it is possible

may never be claimed. She took the Hint immediately, and returned to her Son, told him ſhe had repented oppoſing his Match with Miſs *Summers*, but if he would prepare to venture to *England*, ſhe would ſpend all ſhe had in Search of the fair Fugitive, and conſent to their Union as ſoon as found.

A Reprieve from the moſt ignominious Death could not be more welcome to a Criminal on the Rack; a Voice from Heaven proclaiming Health, Pardon and Happineſs could not produce ſo great a Tranſport, as this Speech did in Sir *Thomas*. He grew almoſt frantic with Joy, and in leſs than a Fortnight recovered a ſound State of Health, and with Impatience waited for the Packet, that he might return to *England*, in Search of the ſole Object of his Happineſs.

We have been landed about a Month in *London*, in which neither Time, Pains, nor Money has been ſpared either by the Baronet or his Mother to find you out; but we had no Hopes till this Morning, when Sir *Thomas* came Home in the higheſt Extacy, and told Lady *Bountiful* that he had met Mr. *Worthy*, a Gentleman of *Carmarthenſhire*, who gave him almoſt an abſolute Promiſe, that in two

or

or three Days he ſhould hear where you were; but, thank God! Madam, I can give him more early Intelligence, unleſs you have any Reaſons to keep it longer a Secret.

Miſs, who had liſtened to the Doctor with great Attention, and felt every tender Emotion on Account of what the amorous Sir *Thomas* ſuffered on her Account, made no Reply to the Doctor, but looked at her Father, and bluſhed as red as Scarlet. You need not bluſh, ſaid the indulgent Parent, your Lover, *Charlotte*, deſerves your tendereſt Acknowledgments; you have deſerved each other, and you may inform Sir *Thomas* when you pleaſe, that a Father's Bleſſing ſhall not be wanting to crown his Happineſs with his newly-recovered Miſtreſs.

Juſt as he had done ſpeaking Mr. *Worthy* entered, who came to conſult with Captain *Summers* how far it was proper to perform his Promiſe with the Baronet; and that Affair being before ſettled with the Doctor, he and that Gentleman went immediately to communicate the joyful Tidings, and Miſs went up to dreſs, in order to receive her much-lov'd Sir *Thomas*.

When Mr. *Worthy* and the Doctor arrived at Lady *Bountiful*'s, they found that Lady and her Son in pretty warm Debate upon the Subject of his intended Marriage with Miſs *Summers*. The good Lady, who now ſaw her Son perfectly recovered of his Illneſs, in ſome Meaſure repented of the Promiſe ſhe had made to give her Conſent to an Alliance ſo diſagreeable to her natural Inclination; and though ſhe did not intend to forfeit her Promiſe, yet ſhe was endeavouring to argue her Son out of his Attachment to that Match, which Sir *Thomas* could not bear with any Degree of Patience. The natural Impetuoſity of his Temper, had rendered the Diſpute pretty warm, when the Gentlemen entered, which Mr. *Worthy* obſerving, told Lady *Bountiful*, that he was come on purpoſe to give her ſuch an Account of Miſs *Summers*, as would remove every poſſible Objection ſhe could have to her Son's Marriage with that matchleſs young Lady, and had no Doubt but that ſhe would find in Miſs *Summers* every Qualification which ſhe could wiſh for in a Daughter-in-Law.

On this Occaſion Mr. *Worthy*, who was perfectly acquainted with the Particulars of her

her Story, ſince ſhe left *Bounty-Park*, gave a brief, but moving Recapitulation of the various Hardſhips that lovely Wanderer had ſuffered, with her ſteady Adherence to Virtue and Honour, amidſt the ſtrongeſt Temptations of Want and Diſtreſs; and concluded it with an Account of the Manner of her Father's diſcovering her, having enlarged copiouſly upon the Article of Captain *Summers* being the next Heir to the Lord Viſcount *F*———, and poſſeſſed of an immenſe perſonal Eſtate, which with the Titles muſt deſcend to the Heirs of the intended Marriage.

Lady *Bountiful* was highly touch'd with the Diſtreſs of the fair Fugitive, and the more ſo, that in every Scene ſhe ſaw herſelf the only Cauſe of all her Sufferings, and ſincerely rejoiced in her Change of Fortune, which ſhe could not help owning rendered her a Match much ſuperior to any thing Sir *Thomas* had any Claim to. But the Effect Mr. *Worthy*'s Narrative had on Lady *Bountiful*, was nothing when compared to the various Emotions it kindled in a Lover's Breaſt. He felt all her Woes, and was ready to faint under the Anguiſh of her Sorrows, and every Faculty of his Soul was dilated with rapturous Joy to find that ſhe had

eſcaped

eſcaped them all, and in ſuch a Manner as to oblige even the Lady *Bountiful* to own that ſhe honoured him in accepting of his Alliance.

But cruelly kind Mr. *Worthy*, added the enraptur'd Baronet, how could you keep me ſo long in Suſpence? How could you conceal from me a Thing on which my very Being depended? Why don't you let me know at once where I can find my adored *Charlotte*, that I may pour out my Soul before that lovely Wanderer? For Heaven's Sake don't keep me longer in Torture! I ſhall grow mad with Impatience unleſs I ſee her ſoon.——I promiſed you, returned Mr. *Worthy*, this Morning to give you ſome Account of her in two or three Days; however, by the Doctor's Means, I have got Permiſſion to introduce you to Captain *Summers* this Afternoon; he has the Diſpoſal of his Daughter, and it's poſſible he may indulge you with a Sight of her.

Sir *Thomas*'s Joy on this Intimation of his Happineſs being ſo near, was beyond the Poet's Rapture, and beyond the Imagination of any Man but he who has experienced the ſoul-dilating Power of a virtuous Paſſion. He was almoſt frantic with Joy, and

and did a thouſand Things, which ſome Men would have thought the Effects of real Madneſs. He made a haſty and irregular Dinner, looked at his Watch twenty Times in a Quarter of an Hour: At laſt five o'Clock, the Hour appointed, came, and he, Mr. *Worthy* and the Doctor took Coach for Captain *Summers*'s.

The Captain received Sir *Thomas* with all poſſible Marks of Eſteem and Affection, which the amorous Baronet would have returned with Expreſſions full of the tendereſt Regard; but he had no ſooner entered the Houſe, which contained his long loſt *Charlotte*, and ſaluted the Father of his adored Miſtreſs, than all his Spirits were in a Flutter, his Speech faultered, and he found himſelf in an unaccountable Confuſion; which the Captain obſerving, and willing to put a Period to his Anxiety, cut the firſt Compliments ſhort, and told Sir *Thomas*, he believed, from what he had heard from the Gentlemen preſent, that he could not give a greater Proof of the Eſteem he had for the Son of Lady *Bountiful*, than by introducing him to one who owed more to that Lady than to him her Parent; and deſired that he would be pleaſed to ſtep into the next Room. The Captain uſhered him into

into the Room where *Charlotte* was ſitting, and on Entrance told her he brought a Gentleman to viſit her, whom it was her Duty to receive with all poſſible Reſpect, and then haſtily withdrew, ſhutting the Door after him, as judging an Interview of that Kind would be beſt conducted without Witneſſes.

The lovely Miſs *Summers* on ſeeing Sir *Thomas* enter, roſe from her Chair to receive him. Tho' ſhe expected him, yet on Sight of the much-loved Object, a Tumult of various Ideas heaved her charming Boſom, a crimſon Bluſh overſpread her lovely Face, and a pearly Drop hovered on her Eyes, a thrilling Tremor ſeized all her Frame, and ſhe was ready to ſink, when the Baronet, not leſs moved with the raviſhing Joy, eagerly catched her in his Arms, and tenderly embracing her, attempted to rouze her drooping Spirits oppreſſed with tumultious Pleaſure.

He would have ſpoke, but Wonder, Joy and Amazement ſtopped his Utterance; he thought her all lovely, all charming when he laſt ſaw her at *Bounty Park*; and ſince that, his Imagination, always full of that dear Idea, had repreſented her to his raviſh-

ed

ed Fancy, in all the Pomp of Youth and Beauty; yet the Idea he had formed, fell ſo far ſhort of the Original now before his Eyes, that he was loſt in extatic Wonder, and, ſpeechleſs, gaz'd on her matchleſs Charms, now arrived at their full Perfection, adorned with every female Grace, which a long Acquaintance with the polite World had given her, and heightned by the Circumſtances of their Meeting free from every Check that could cloud the Proſpect of an eternal Union. Who would not have been raviſhed to find in his Embraces, ſo much Youth, ſo much Beauty, adorned with ſuch conſpicuous Virtue after ſo tedious a Separation? He muſt have been leſs or more than Man, that could have bore the thrilling Bliſs, without diſſolving into unutterable Extacy. He led her back to her Chair, and ſeated himſelf by her, holding one of her Hands, on which he imprinted a thouſand Kiſſes, but wanted Words to expreſs the Fulneſs of his Heart. They paſſed ſome Minutes in this ſilent Rapture, when at laſt the raviſhed Baronet found his Speech. Good Heavens I thank thee, cried he in a Rapture, thou ha'ſt at laſt compenſated all my Sufferings, and in this Moment has given me a Taſte of Felicity beyond mortal Conception. To ſee the love-

ly

ly Fugitive, to hold her thus and gaze upon thoſe matchleſs Beauties, is worth an Age of Pain. There is but one thing wanting to compleat my Bliſs, to know that my *Charlotte* has ſome Pleaſure, in this long wiſhed-for Meeting. Speak my Angel, and confirm my Felicity, by owning that the Sight of one for whom you have undergone ſo much, gives you ſome Pleaſure; own my *Charlotte* the pleaſing Truth, and let not that ſtubborn Virtue of yours daſh my dawning Joys. Why that Silence, why that Bluſh, why turn away thoſe lovely Eyes, is it ſo much I aſk? but to hear you ſpeak and bleſs me with the Sound, that my Preſence is not diſagreeable to you. Far from it, replied the bluſhing Maid, I ſhould be baſely ungrateful indeed, if the Sight of one to whoſe Family I owe ſo much, did not give me great Satisfaction.—Still harping on the cold Theme of Gratitude; I know it my lovely *Charlotte*, you have had enough, nay too much of that frozen Virtue, but may not I hope that ſome Part of your Satisfaction takes its Riſe from a tenderer Motive; is there nothing due to all my anxious Nights and weary Hours, to a Paſſion that has no Bounds, and to thoſe Vows that firſt warmed your virgin Heart. Were it poſſible for you but to imagine the racking

Pain

Pain and Agonies of Soul I have hourly felt, ſince laſt I ſaw you, you would certainly, out of Compaſſion, own that I had ſuffered enough, and that the moſt rigid Virtue would authorize giving me ſome Hope, that you would not ſtand in the Way of my Bliſs, ſince all other Obſtacles are removed; ſpeak my *Charlotte*, and compleat my Happineſs, or tell me what elſe I muſt ſuffer to merit a ſmall Return of Love. I ſee by this cold Indifference I have not yet ended all my Sufferings, and that I muſt do more to expiate the many Misfortunes to which my Paſſion has expoſed my lovely Charmer; tell me, thou dear virtuous Maid, what I muſt do to blot out the Remembrance of theſe Wrongs you ſuffered on my Account. Oh *Charlotte*, they were many, they were cruelly ſevere, and I, only I was to blame, my whole Life is but too ſhort to expiate your Sufferings; point out but the Way, and all my Faculties ſhall be employed to give you Satisfaction. Don't to rment your ſelf, replied the lovely *Charlotte*, with what I ſuffered, it was the Will of Providence, that I ſhould ſuffer, and I am far from regretting it, ſince by it I have been confirmed in the Paths of Honour, and have learned the intrinſic Excellence of a ſteady Virtue. We

have

have had each our Share Sir *Thomas* of Adverſity, the Storm is blown over, and we muſt now only think of what is paſſed, to give a Reliſh to preſent and future Felicity. I am far from wiſhing you to ſuffer more on my Account, and wiſh I had bore the Shock alone, without involving you and your Family in ſo much Uneaſineſs on my Account—Yet ſtill, interrupted Sir *Thomas*, you are ſilent my fair Philoſopher in the main Point, you make no Anſwer to my Paſſion, and only wiſh me to ſuffer no more, while your Coldneſs is worſe than all I have hitherto endured, for till I ſaw you, I ſtill had Hopes, that I had ſome Share in your Affection, and that nothing but your rigid Regard to Lady *Bountiful* hindered you from owning the ſoul-raviſhing Truth; and yet when that Obſtacle is removed, I find my lovely Charmer averſe to compleat my Bliſs——What would you have me ſay, replied the bluſhing Virgin, I am now, Sir *Thomas*, under a Parent's Authority, whoſe Tenderneſs merits every Return of Duty. It is not impoſſible but he may authorize your Suit; if he does, what Virtue can demand, a Paſſion ſo generous and conſtant as yours may expect. Theſe laſt Words raiſed Sir *Thomas* to the higheſt Pinacle of Bliſs, he was once more ſilent with Joy, and im-

printed

printed his Acknowledgment on her Hand, which he now and then preſſed with eager Fondneſs to his panting Boſom. It would be tedious perhaps to the Reader to repeat all the fond Things that paſſed on this Occaſion, the greateſt Part may very well be imagined. When Captain *Summers* judged that the firſt Tumult of the fond Interview was paſſed he brought the Doctor and Mr. *Worthy* to join the loving Pair, by whoſe Eyes they could eaſy learn the Satisfaction they enjoy'd in each other's Company.

Sir *Thomas* ſtaid pretty late, and returned Home full of the Idea of his approaching Happineſs. In a few Days the Preliminaries to the Marriage were ſettled, and it now depended on Miſs to fix the happy Minute. Sir *Thomas* waited on her for that Purpoſe, but he could not bring her to a Reſolution; ſhe would have put it off for a Month or two, which appeared to him as ſo many Ages; in ſhort, his Impatience could not put up with the Delay. He made Intereſt with Mrs. *Worthy* to perſuade her into more reaſonable Terms, who found Means to reduce the Months to Weeks. The happy Day at laſt arrived. The Marriage was ſolemnized, at which were preſent all the principle Perſons we have ſpoke of, who were

were overjoy'd to ſee ſo much Virtue and Conſtancy ſo juſtly rewarded.

Sir *Thomas* and his lovely Spouſe ſtaid a Month or two in Town, till Captain *Summers* could ſettle his Affairs for a Removal, and then he and they accompanied the good old Lady to *Bounty Park*, where they all lived in the greateſt Harmony and Happineſs for ſeveral Years, till Death by degrees ſtole them at an advanced Age from each other.

5 JA 59

F I N I S.

42